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NEW DELHI

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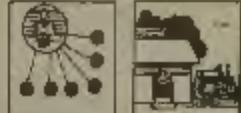


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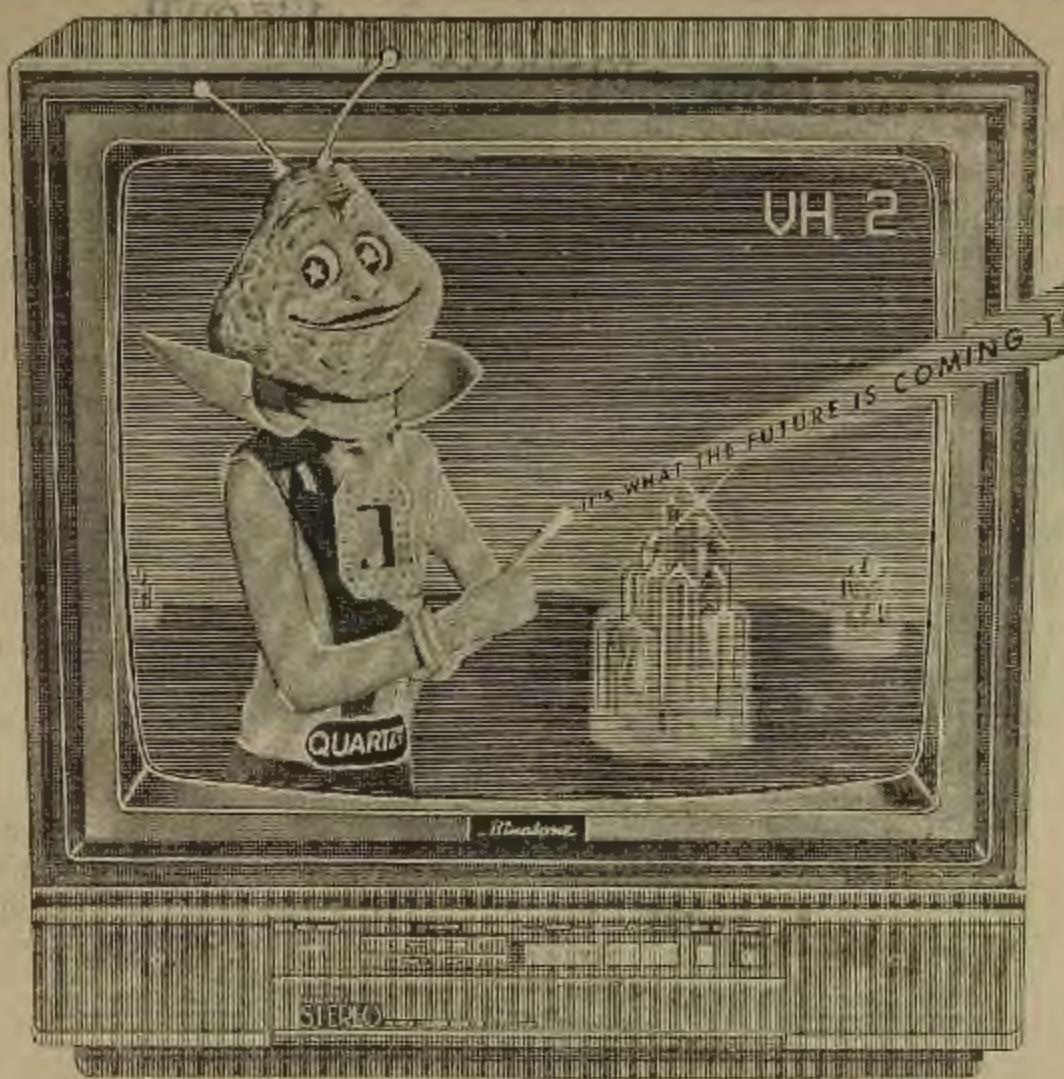
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A THOUGHT FROM GURBANI

"So long as the Khalsa retains his individuality,
I shall give all the glory.
But when he deviates to non-Sikh practices;
I will not trust thee."

—Guru Gobind Singh

The Spokesman Weekly

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LARGER CONSPIRACY?

Besieged by scandals, beleaguered by failure of his policies, and cornered by nose-diving of his prestige as head of a government which promised to "work faster," Mr Rajiv Gandhi seems determined to use his mother's assassination on October 31, 1984 as the central theme of his electoral campaign for ensuing Lok Sabha elections, this is because the official media has failed miserably to rekindle the sympathy and uncertainty which followed Mrs Gandhi's murder. Instead of putting the tragedy behind us, the ruling Congress (I) has chosen to resurrect the old bogeys of threats to country's unity and integrity. This is just a replay of 1984 campaign, dubbing the opposition as supporters of secessionism and destabilisation and projecting Congress (I) as the sole party which can keep the country together. Mr Rajiv Gandhi's remarks about a "larger conspiracy" are just a crude attempt to cover up the damage caused to his party by Thukkar committee report and to salvage his own sinking image. Playing serenades to their "beloved" leader, 140 Congress (I) MPs have, in a statement, demanded exposure of all the conspirators. Five years after her death, Mrs Gandhi continues to cast eerie shadow over India.

Special Investigation Team (SIT), composed of senior police officers, has just succumbed to political demands of the ruling party instead of ensuring deliverance of justice. Its 24-page charge sheet does not mention any political leader by name and yet Mr Gandhi has accused the opposition of supporting those who had a hand in his mother's killing. This is a very serious charge, if true. This tirade is of the same genre which the prime minister made in parliament last month in which he accused the opposition of helping terrorists and terrorism in Punjab. But later he had to make apologies which amounted to withdrawal of the charge. Now again he has picked up a few trees and presents them as the wood.

Many questions arise. Why did SIT wait for more than four years to launch the prosecution now when Lok Sabha elections are near at hand? How could a band of just five persons trigger a massive wave of destabilisation and resultant chaos in India with isolated acts of violence, sabotage and killings? And how could they ensure "stability" in Pakistan and overthrow of pro-Russian government in Afghanistan through remote control? SIT has been guilty of indulgence in wild imaginations. New nations are born either through voluntary surrender of power by the rulers or when the ruling army is defeated in a war. Khalistan cannot come into being unless either New Delhi agrees to its formation or the entire Indian army is defeated. Neither of the prospects is in sight yet. This fabricated ruse is to befool the masses.

It is for the courts to pronounce the guilt or innocence of the four persons now hauled up. But the main

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Chandigarh Meet

Chandigarh meet, organised by the eight-member committee of the central cabinet, for April 12 to get the views of various political parties on the Punjab problem cannot yield much. For one thing, the centre has staged a volte-face on its previous stand to hammer out a consensus on the issues involved. Now the committee will meet political leaders of various parties "individually" and not in a round-table conference. The views of all parties are well-known and it did not need a special exercise to ferret them out. If the committee has to coalesce the divergent views into one wholesome proposition, then it could easily do so without the new inflows. Obviously, it is another attempt to throw dust into the eyes of the gullible public. Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi

had promised an all-party meet in September last year, and he constituted the committee two months later. During the six months of its life, it met only five times and that also for brief periods. It covered the known ground and does not seem to have drawn up concrete proposals for discussion with the political parties. It is just buying time. Many feel, and not without justification, that Mr Gandhi wants to keep the Punjab issue alive till the next Lok Sabha elections.

Akalis constitute a big force in Punjab. Without their partici-

pation, any discussion would be meaningless. And how can the Akalis send a representative delegation when some senior leaders, like Sardar Prakash Singh Badal and Sardar Gurbachan Singh Tohra, are under detention. The Akali leaders, now outside, are feather-weight by comparison and, despite loud noises made by them, cannot pose as real spokesman of the Sikh community. Sardar Tohra has displayed his clout when he made SGPC Senior Vice-President Harni Singh Tarn Tarani resign and got Sardar Mani Singh Calcutta reinstated as SGPC secretary. And Akali politics revolve around SGPC axis. Sardar Badal is by far the most popular Akali leader and is acceptable to Hindus also. Their release should have preceded the Chandigarh dialogue.

As matters stand, Sardar Tohra has advised Akalis to stay away from the meeting. This is not a wise policy, as thereby Akali case would go down by default. Akalis of three major factions should attend the meeting and forcefully present their cases. They must expose the shenanigans of the New Delhi rulers and stress how they have lost their credibility among the Punjab masses. The Rajiv-Lengowal accord may be dead for all practical purposes but it can form the base of a new viable formula.

link between the killers and the conspirators, Balbir Singh, has been acquitted by the supreme court and he cannot be tried on the same charge again. The two accused have been charged with organising "Gurmat Prachar camps" but there participants are asked to follow the true path of Sikhism and spread its message of universal brotherhood. No politics is discussed there. Moreover, these camps were not held after June 4, 1984, as All-India Sikh Students Federation, its organiser, had been banned. Professors Dalip Singh and Jagmohan Singh are accused of having supplied "explosives" to Attinderpal Singh but this very charge was not accepted by a designated court in Punjab which released the first two on bail a few weeks ago. It is an oddity that plane hijacking has now become a crime in Congress (I) eyes. In 1980, on return to power, Mrs Indira Gandhi had rewarded one of the Pandey brother with an assembly berth for hijacking a plane during Janta rule. One of Sardar Surjan Singh Mann's "crimes" is that he invited Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale to police lines at Faridkot, during his tenure as police superintendent there, to give lectures on Sikhism. But the Sant was New Delhi's blue-eyed man in those days. If Sardar Mann violated the official code of conduct, why was he promoted and not suspended?

If the four accused expressed "anguish" over army's invasion of the Golden Temple complex, there was nothing new, as the entire Sikh community felt aggrieved and badly bruised at heart at the desecration of their holiest shrine. In that case, the two ex-Sikhs should be pushed into the dock. There are many gaping holes in the SIT case.

Contradictions Galore

Union Home State Minister P Chidambaram has developed a penchant for putting his foot into his mouth while making statements on Punjab extremism. At one time, he dashed out the theory that president's rule was the sole panacea, as Sardar Bacha's ministry had failed to check the menace. But on April 3 this year he told Lok Sabha that monthly average of persons killed during president's rule (May 12, 1987 to February 28, 1989) was 126.15 as against a paltry 42.16 during Bacha's rule (October 1, 1985 to May 11, 1987). This means a three-fold increase in extremist rampage. Of course, Mr Chidambaram claimed that monthly average of terrorists killed rose from 6.17 during Bacha's government to 33.72 under president's rule. This could well prove increased activity on part of security forces. But Mr Chidambaram let the cat out of the bag when he admitted that "it is not possible to say how many of those apprehended and killed (on Indo-Pak border) were suspected terrorists." This betrays traits of mud-massacre of all and sundry on the border.

Mr Chidambaram's performance in Lok Sabha on April 6 was based on mere suppositions and hypotheses, with contradictions thrown in plenty. Basing his argument on English translation

of a letter to Gurukul Singh Munjabal and Bhai Wanan Singh Zafarwal and found on two intruders killed on March 15, he claimed that after meeting between Mr Rajiv Gandhi and Mr Benazir Bhutto, Pakistani government had agreed to close down training camps for terrorists and Pakistani Rangers, counterpart of Indian Border Security Force, had been ordered "not to provide any facilities to Sikhs as was done in the past." But in the same breath, the minister said that Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence was aiding and abetting the terrorists in India. He cannot have it both ways. Either ISI is still training Sikh militants or has stopped patronising them. If they are getting aid from Pakistan, then how can they have any murderous designs against the Pakistani prime minister?

Mr Chidambaram has also spoken of a nexus between Afghan rebels and Sikh extremists and, as evidence, cited contacts abroad at "arms purchase level"; a few Stinger missiles were indeed purchased. But, he said, "there is no evidence that they were brought into India." It would have been better if he had talked of things which could be proved and not merely sawed the air with verbal banters.

Alternative Forum

A new sea-change is discernible on Punjab's political horizon. Militant youth, represented by Damdami Taksal and All-India Sikh Students Federation, have announced that they would seek "alternative political forum" to the Akali Dal. The Akalis, indulging in the fruitless exercise of permutations and combinations and craves for self-aggrandizement, believe more in fission than fusion. Recent attempts by Captain Amarinder Singh to bring the warring Akali factions together floundered on the rocks of personal vanity and ambitions. This has left the field free again for fundamentalists and the youth, especially when established Akali leadership has lost all credibility, the masses have begun to look upon the latter as a bunch of unscrupulous persons who have discarded notions of Panthic good and hugged only their own race for self and power.

The task of Damdami Taksal and AISSF is rendered easier because of the change in their political objectives. They no longer seek Khalistan, an independent and sovereign state outside the Indian Union. They are now clearly inclined to join the political process and become part of the national mainstream. They

have developed their own aspirations and are not willing to share them with the established Akali leadership. Hence, the search for an alternative political forum.

The combing operations conducted by the army in the countryside in 1984 drove thousands of youths across the border into Pakistan. Camps were set up to train them in insurgency activities but these did not measure upto the expectations of the organisers. Only a small group of youths remained to complete the training. The bulk returned disillusioned and turned their minds away from secessionist or terrorist activities. It is these youths who are now yearning for a solution of the Punjab problem within the Indian constitutional framework. The centre is also keen to have parleys with them.

The Akalis should blame themselves for their plight. Instead of forging unity, they have chosen to split and split umpteen times and indulge in mud-slinging and trading of charges of corruption and "betrayal of the Panth" against one another. No wonder, Punjab might throw up a new brand of political leadership, as the new generation takes over.

Jalalabad Gurdwara

There is sad news for Sikhs everywhere. The famous gurdwara in Jalalabad, an Afghan town near Pakistani border, has been razed to the ground a few days ago when it was hit by 23 rockets fired by Afghan rebels. The shrine, named after Guru Tegh Bahadur, had provided shelter to nearly 2,000 of the estimated 10,000 persons of Indian origin residing in that beleaguered city. The number of those killed in the gurdwara is not known yet but it could run into hundreds. Some of the Indians, who had survived the attack on the gurdwara, were flown to Kabul by Afghan air force helicopters. One of them said that about three-fourths of Jalalabad's two-lakh population had fled to Pakistan. But Indians could not join the exodus across the Durand Line and had, therefore, sought refuge in the gurdwara and the nearby Peeranwali Dargah, as water and food were available there. After the gurdwara had been destroyed, these Indians took shelter in the Dargah.

The gurdwara is not the only religious place to be demolished. Eye-witnesses say that hundreds of mosques, schools, shops and residential houses have been turned into rubble. In fact, Jalalabad looks like a ghost town, as the rebels advance on it from three directions under a cover of ferociously ferocious artillery fire. But

the government forces, aided by heavy aerial bombardment, have so far beaten back rebel attacks; two of them were converted into virtual rout. When a group of 30 Indians from the Jalalabad called on Afghan President Najibullah, he expressed great sympathy and sorrow over loss of life and opined that "even houses of God are not safe from rebel marauders who claim to wage the war in name of Allah."

This attack on the gurdwara also blows to bits the claim made by Union Home State Minister Chidambaram in parliament on April 6 about a nexus between Afghan rebels and Sikhs outside India. If there is indeed any liaison, let alone complete understanding and unity of purpose and strategy, then how come that Sikhs, sheltering in the Jalalabad gurdwara, were subject to rocket attacks? After all, the targets are chosen with deliberation and precision before the rockets are fired. It only shows that Indian government leaders do not shrink from using any stick to beat the Sikhs with and malign them in order to save their own shaky throne. Mr Chidambaram had also deduced that there was threat to Mr Rajiv Gandhi's life from this nexus. He seems to have allowed his imagination to take dizzy flight, without any hard evidence to support the yarn.

Utterly Shameful

The attack by 350 Congress(I) students wing workers on New Delhi residence of Mr Ram Jethmalani, noted criminal lawyer and prominent parliamentarian, on April 7 deserves to be condemned in the strongest possible terms. Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi cannot escape the blame for such ugly demonstration of brute force. His incendiary speech at the national convention of NSUI, in which he made a vitriolic attack on all opposition leaders and charged them with supporting Punjab terrorists, was the immediate incitement.

There is no love lost between Mr Gandhi and Mr Jethmalani. The former did not like the lawyer defending Kehar Singh and Balbir Singh, two accused in his mother's assassination case, little realising that it is the professional duty of a lawyer to present his clients' case with all legal acumen and brilliance. This did not mean that Mr Jethmalani approved the mindset he merely wanted justice to be done and it was because of his arguments that Balbir Singh was acquitted by the supreme court. Mr Gandhi's ire was also aroused when the irrepressible lawyer addressed a series of questions to

him in connection with various scandals surrounding him. Unable to answer the questions, Mr Gandhi calling the questioner "a barking dog"—a language of the gutter which does not behove the head of a government.

Since March 3 last, Mr Gandhi has been carping endlessly that Mr Jethmalani has been supporting Khalistan. The noted lawyer rebutted this charge in an article, at a press conference, and an open letter to the prime minister. Similar charges the prime minister has been hurling at senior Akali leaders also without any rhyme or reason. For instance, he had dubbed both Sardar Prakash Singh Badal and Sant Harchand Singh Longowal as pro-Khalistanis and sent them to jail. Later, he signed an accord with the same Sant.

Mr Gandhi should fight political battles with his adversaries with intellectual responses and must display a certain amount of propriety, mutual dignity and respect for dissent. If he asks his minions to settle scores on the streets with basest means of brute force, then posterity shall not forgive him for being grave-digger of democracy in India.

Police Violence In Punjab

By: V.M. Tarkunde

Along with N.D. Panjab and Tejinder Singh, general secretary and regional secretary, respectively, of the Citizens For Democracy, I spent three days (18th, 19th and 20th March) in a region of Punjab which is worst affected by terrorist activities. With Amritsar as our head-quarters, we visited some villages in the Batala tehsil of Gurdaspur district. We were not accompanied by any persons belonging to a political party. We had to spend a good deal of time in each village to establish rapport with the Sarpanch and his friends, to brief them about our impartiality and secret information in regard to the terrorist menace. We had to spend several hours in each village, so that we were able to visit only five villages in three days, besides meeting a cross-section of the people in Amritsar. Although our data base is therefore narrow, the area visited by us is fairly representative of the three border districts of Amritsar, Gurdaspur and Ferozepur. The conclusions reached by us are given below.

Firstly, none of the villagers whom we met and with whom we discussed the problem of terrorism had any attachment to the demand for Khalistan. That was quite clear from the way they answered our questions on the Khalistan issue. There is a sense of alienation in almost the whole of the Sikh community, but the alienation is from the Punjab Government and the Government of India, not from the Indian people. There is no anti-Hindu feeling among the Sikhs, whether in villages or in cities.

Double Harassment

Secondly, the villagers did not show any sympathy at all for the terrorists. In fact, they went out of their way to tell us that about 90 per cent of the terrorists are mere dacoits and extortionists. The villagers said that they are subjected to a double harassment — by the police in daytime and by the terrorists at night. That most of the terrorists are dacoits and extortionists was also the opinion of a highly-placed police officer whom we met in Amritsar.

That leads to our third and most important conclusion. If there is no support for Khalistan among the people and no commitment to Khalistan among the terrorists, why does terrorism continue almost unabated in Punjab? We asked this question to all the people we met and the answer without a single exception

was that terrorism is continuing in Punjab mainly because it is fed by the ruthless and brutal oppression to which selected families as well as whole villages are subjected by the police. The police have not only failed to seek the co-operation of the people in meeting the terrorist menace, but the arrogance, high-handedness and calculated violence of the police induces some of the young boys from the affected families to join terrorist gangs.

The most frequent charge on which villagers are arrested by the police, beaten up, tortured and kept in detention is that they harboured the terrorists. What happens is that a small group of terrorists goes to a village at night and demands food and shelter. The terrorists are heavily armed and it is impossible for the villagers to refuse their demands. Next day, the police approach the villager, arrest him and his family members, beat them up and often deprive them of money and other moveables. An instance may be cited of what happened in Padda village. Ajit Singh Shah, his son and two relations from that village are still in jail. They were severely beaten for having harboured terrorists and a sum of Rs 15,000 and some moveables were taken away by the police.

We heard such accounts from almost every village we visited. A curious story was told by Swaran

Singh and his friend Sukhdev Singh at Fatehgarh Chauran. Swaran Singh has been a Congressmen, being in possession of licensed arms; he was, able to repel an attack by some terrorists when they came to his farmhouse in Bobarwal village. For greater safety he shifted to another village, Mohan Bhandari, where he had a commission agency. On February 7, 1989, a number of terrorists came to that village and looted all the shops including that of Swaran Singh. The police came to the village the next day and arrested all the shopkeepers including Swaran Singh for having given assistance to the terrorists. Swaran Singh was kept in jail for four days and was severely beaten and tortured. He has now abdicated to Fatehgarh Chauran. He told us that out of sheer disgust he has decided to leave the Congress and join the Bharatiya Janata Party.

Sometimes all the adults in a village are gathered together by the police and beaten up because of the suspicion that they supported the terrorists. On January 11, 1989, about 4 a.m., the police came to Sachur village in 23 or 24 trucks and jeeps, called out all the men and women, asked all the adult men (about 300 in number) to lie on the ground with their faces down and beat them mercilessly with leather straps and wooden batons for more than an hour. The operation was directed

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by the SSP of the area. The villagers themselves told us this story. They also said 15 days earlier a similar treatment was given to all the adults in the nearby Dhawala village.

More serious notice is taken by the police of families when they suspect that a family member has joined a terrorist gang. In Bolewal village, a young man named Kolsati Singh had absconded and was suspected (probably rightly) of having become a terrorist. The police arrested his elder brother Nitwar Singh, tortured him and subsequently declared that he died in a police encounter. Later, they arrested the youngest brother Dilbagh Singh, and tortured him for extracting information about his absconding brother. On May 2, 1988, the police visited the house again about 2 a.m. and as Dilbagh Singh was trying to run away he was shot dead. The story was told by his fearful mother and corroborated by the villagers. The SSP of the area was present when Dilbagh Singh



was shot dead. Next day the DIG came to the villagers, and after giving the instance of Dilbagh Singh threatened them of the consequences of giving succour to the terrorists. Such cases of killing by the police are quite frequent.

We heard reports from different people that the police themselves have set up non-official forces consisting of armed gangs whose function is to trace terrorists and exterminate them. These gangs are reported to be indulging in oppressing villagers and extracting money from them.

Beating and Torture

It is not surprising that some young boys from the families which are thus subjected to beating, torture and fake encounters join one or other of the terrorist gangs. By all accounts, police atrocities are at present the main cause of the continuation of terrorism at least in the border districts of Punjab.

We were told that a contributory cause of continuing terrorism is the prevailing unemployment in the rural areas of Punjab. Due to increase in family members and consequent subdivision of land, young boys remain unemployed, and when their families are subjected by the police to torture and humiliation, they are drawn towards the path of violence.

Fortunately, the Punjab Government appears to have realised the harmfulness of police excesses. On February 18, 1989, a meeting was called at Shankarpura in Batala tehsil of more than 1,600 Panchayat Sarpanches including those who had resigned in view of police brutalities. The Governor, Mr. Siddhart Shastri Ray, addressed the gathering, requested the Sarpanches to withdraw their resignations and said that such excesses would not happen again. Some villagers told us that after the Governor's speech, there has been some improvement in the behaviour of the police, but excesses still continue. We were told that on the 10th of March, about 300 to 400 policemen came to Bolowal village, collected all the men and boys above the age of 11, and made them sit in the open the whole day. At the end, 30 persons were taken into custody, beaten up with leather straps and then released. More recently, on March 16, Avtar Singh and his brother were taken into custody at Jafarwal village because of their suspected terrorist connection and were killed by a non-official force set up by the police.

It will be recalled that in August 1985, the Citizens For Democracy had, after a fortnight's enquiry, published a report on the police atrocities in Punjab after the Blaster opera-

tion of 4th and 5th of June, 1984. The report pointed out that as a result of police atrocities, a form of State terrorism had developed in Punjab and that it had been counter-productive as it had led to the growth of terrorist activity. The book was banned on the ground that it was seditious. What is stated above fully vindicates the conclusions drawn in that report four years ago.

On the basis of our enquiry, some concrete suggestions can be made for improvement of the Punjab situation. First and foremost, all police excesses must be stopped. It is the duty of the Punjab Government to see that the police act within the bounds of law and in accordance with the Constitution. Even if the police cannot be persuaded at short notice to change their attitude

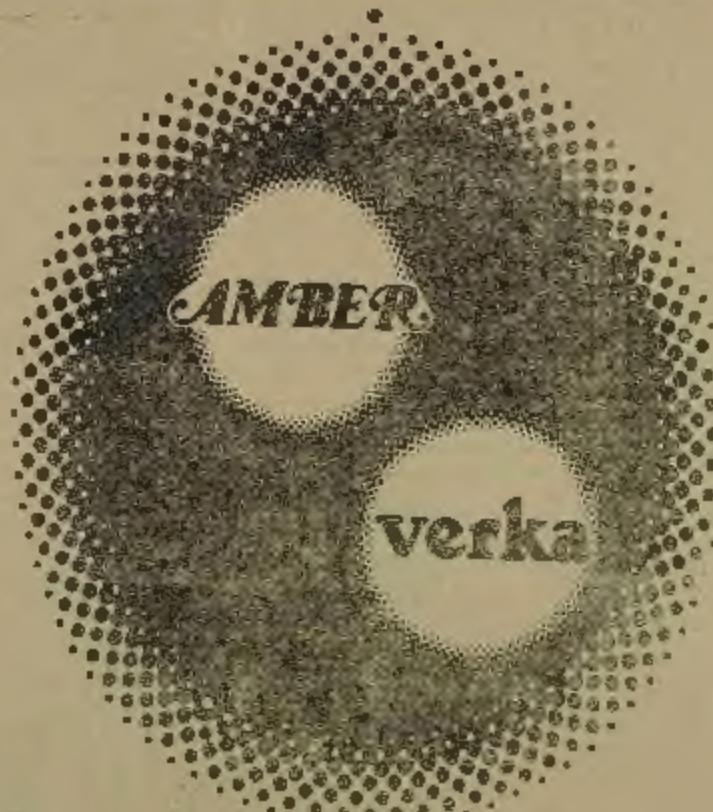
towards the people and to seek public co-operation for the suppression of terrorism, they can at least be required to adhere to the law.

Secondly, it must be realised that one of the main causes of the alienation of the Sikh community lies in the fact that no action is taken against the culprits of the Sikh massacre which took place in Delhi and elsewhere in 1984. The Government has rendered the Jain-Babri Committee, which recommended prosecution of some of the culprits, entirely ineffective. The work of that Committee should be revived and its recommendations should be carried out.

Thirdly, a process should be initiated for the eventual establishment of a democratic régime in Punjab. The Prime Minister or

the Cabinet Committee appointed for the purpose should discuss the matter with opposition parties and initiate a process for the re-establishment of democracy in Punjab. It must be added that the proposed panchayat elections in Punjab in May or June will not be helpful to the solution of the Punjab problem. All the persons with whom we made the enquiry told us that if panchayat elections were held at present, only persons approved by the terrorists will dare to be candidates and the resulting panchayats will be wholly nonrepresentative. The political normalisation of Punjab has to be a slow process and it should be undertaken after the police excesses are terminated and in cooperation with all the concerned political parties.

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Guru Gobind Singh's Miracle Of Creation

Ideologically, the Khalsa aimed at a balanced combination of the ideals of Bhakti and Shakti or to be a brotherhood in faith and brotherhood in arms at one and the same time.

the masses were drawn; but now the position changed. Jats formed the bulk of the converts being large in number, took up the leadership from the Khatrias with the result that "the rise of militant Sikhism became the rise of Jat power in the Punjab". The social status of the Jats who were technically low in the caste hierarchy also improved.

To Koer Singh the Khalsa hewed the movement of the hitherto neglected classes in the social organisation of the Hindus. The people belonging to scavenger class rejoiced in this august body. The Guru also felt proud of them and called them as his sons (Raagritta Guru ka Bees). Jats in particular were conscious of this change in the composition of the society.

Ideals of Bhakti and Shakti

Ideologically, the Khalsa aimed at a balanced combination of the ideals of Bhakti and Shakti or to be a brotherhood in faith and brotherhood in arms at one and the same time.

The Guru's injunctions included that the Khalsa should bear arms, Kirpan, being one and the most important of them, that they

for home I crave with clasped hands

That when the end of my life cometh,

I may die fighting in a mighty battle"

As is evident from the utterances of the Guru in connection with the Khalsa, the military qualities were given place of eminence. In fact militarism was adopted as an article of faith. The Guru says :—

All stock, I am thy slave

Deeming me, thy own, preserve me;

Thou of whom honour, whose arm thou hast taken,

Deeming me thine own, cherish me

Single out and destroy mine enemies

May both my kitchen and my sword prevail in the world.

The Guru's primary concern was thus with his kitchen (Dagh) and his sword (Tege), the one as the emblem of service to assist the weak, the helpless and the oppressed and the other the emblem of power to extrapate the tyrants, and the Khalsa was the instrument that he created to achieve his two-fold purpose.

By : Prof Surjit Singh Grewal

should use double-edged sword in the preparation of the Amrit, and use of the appellation of Singh at the end of each name signified the martial valour. The Khalsa was expected to inculcate. Sword became an object of worship with the Sikhs, for it symbolised power and safety. The sentiment of the Sikhs for the sword was so much that God was given the name of 'All Steel' by the Guru. Thus being so, those who worshipped sword were promised exemption from every other kind of religious rites or ceremonies and he was to be regarded as the Khalsa "who combats in the war, who moves on the war-horse, who is ever waging war and who is continuously armed."

The Guru himself says :—

"I am the son of a brave man, not of a Brahmin

How can I perform austerities?

How can I turn my attention to Thee,

O Lord, forsake of domestic affairs?

Now be pleased to grant me

Transformation

All this, coupled with the new awareness of social egalitarianism had a miraculous effect on the psyche of the disciples of the Guru. Teja Singh and Dr Ganda Singh have observed that, even those people who had been considered dregs of humanity were changed, as if by magic into something rich and strange. The sweepers, the barbers, and constipated who had not even touched a sword and whose whole generations had lived as grovelling slaves of the so-called higher classes became under the stimulating leadership of Guru Gobind Singh, doughty warriors who never shrank from fear and who were ready to rush into the jaws of death at the bidding of the Guru.

According to Gourdon 'the dry bones of an oppressed peasantry were stirred into life, and the institution of the Sikh baptismal rite at the hands of a new disciple anywhere—in a place of worship, in a house or by the roadside—brought about the more full and wide spread development of the new faith.'

The Emergency Of Anew Social Pattern

In this way, within a few months, a new people were born, bearded and bearded, fully armed and with a invaders' zeal to build a new Commonwealth. They implicitly believed that 'the Khalsa shall rule, their enemies will be scattered, only they that seek refuge will be saved'.

A New Social Pattern

From sociological point of view, the Khalsa represented a new pattern wherein tribal or caste affiliations had no room, nor were the superstitions, demoting ceremonies and empty rituals given any credence.

On the other hand, it stood for broad outlook transcending parochial prejudices. Even the differences on the basis of religion were considered irrelevant or the creation either of the ignorance or of opaque understanding. Exactly this impression emerges when the Guru goes into the ears of his disciples that the four tribes of the Hindus the Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishnavites and Sudras, would like beetles out and Kshatriya become all of one colour when well-chewed.

The Khalsa stood for righteousness, social equality, faith in Nirguna God, honest labour, and division of its fruit and repudiation of all types of exploitation. Evidently, this type of social pattern was more fit for arousing the dormant energies of the people and making them flow into the channel which fed the national stream of the country.

Growth of Nationalism

It was significant from another respect also, as, for instance, it generated among the people the longing for social freedom and ascendancy. Evidently, this pattern of society was more congenial for the dormant energies to awaken with the result that the new confidence and new aspirations began to articulate the people—obviously the precondition for progress. Moreover, as the accent of the programme of the Khalsa was to transcend the artificial barriers on the basis of caste, creed, race and region, the field was prepared for the sapping of nationalism to strike root.

Culmination of Sikh-Guru Relationship

Moreover, the Khalsa marked the culminating of the Sikh-Guru relationship. The Guru's regard for the Sikhs was an old thing but with a great difference.

Guru Gobind Singh expressed his feelings about the Khalsa in one of the Hazara Shabads in which his appreciation for them is juxtaposed with his decision to do his best for them.

"All the battle I have won against; tyranny
I have fought with the devoted backing of these people
Through them only have I been able to bestow gifts
By their kindness, the storehouses have been filled
I owe my education to them
By their kindness were the enemies killed

I owe my glorious existence to them
Otherwise ordinary men like we are found in millions
Service to them is pleasing to me
I do not enjoy serving any other people
Giving gifts to them is meritorious
Gifts to them prove fruitful in the next life
Praiseworthy is this, all other gifts are futile.
My wealth, my body, my soul, my head,
All that is in my house is dedicated to them."

The consideration of the Guru for his Khalsa should not be interpreted as a personal affair; it should be interpreted in terms of the mission of the Guru. Just as the Guru in his two eyes was the chosen instrument of God for restraining men from senseless acts so his Khalsa were the willing agents for working out that mission. Thus the Khalsa was the team of mankind always at war for destroying the evil and protecting righteousness.

Evolution of Sikh Sangat

In addition to it, the Khalsa marked the completion of the evolution of the Sikh Sangat. In the beginning, Sangat was merely a religious gathering of devotees functioning more or less in isolation. Gradually, there occurred an increase in its functions and the isolation of one from another was lessened by the forging of common links, such as the preparation of scriptures, the building up

of certain religious centres, institutions of Manjis and Mosands as the agencies of the central leadership and assertion of the principle of the supremacy of the Guru.

With the foundation of the Khalsa, the net-work of semi-integrated Sangats was fully integrated. The *Govtashag* of the Khalsa with supreme powers later on marked the completion of the historical process long underway.

Social and religious revolutions

Besides this, the Khalsa symbolized in itself the determination to complete the social and religious revolutions inaugurated by Guru Nanak. "The successors of Guru Nanak had guided these revolutions with great devotion and ability. Yet there were some lapses to be seen at the time of Guru Gobind Singh's accession. The creation of the Khalsa was not merely an endeavour to integrate the members of this community, it was also a powerful bid to carry to completion his predecessors' revolution in the field of social and religious life."

The code of conduct prescribed for the newly created Khalsa was so devised as to impose a discipline on the Sikhs to ensure firm coherence and commitment on their part to the lofty ideals of Sikhism.

A Few New Doctrines

With the creation of the Khalsa, a few new doctrines were established. The first doctrine was the doctrine of the theocratic

democracy by his selected, not elected five representatives of the people from amongst thousands of devotees of collective responsibility by authorising the five beloved only in the presence of the holy Granth to assume authority implicitly to be obeyed by the whole community.

Khalsa a Great Vehicle of Revolution

Still from another point of view, the new order was significant. It marked the period of important beginnings. By the Guru's reforms, and under the impact of their dynamic and magnetic leadership, the community was not only strengthened but also converted into a great vehicle of revolution. Cunningham writes that "the last apostle of the Sikhs effectively roused the dormant energies of a vanquished people and filled them with a lofty though fitful longing for social freedom and national ascendancy, the proper adjuncts of that purity of worship which had been preached by Nanak." In the words of Narang, "Though he (the Guru) did not break the shackles that bound his nation, he had set their souls free and filled their hearts with a lofty longing for freedom and ascendancy. He had broken the chain of make-believe sanctity attached to the lord of Delhi and destroyed the awe and terror inspired by Muslim tyranny." The Khalsa accepted the challenge of the powerful Mughal Empire and embarked upon a national struggle of liberation.



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WE COME NEXT TO TAJ

Let us give a thought to that great event which took place on Baisakhi Day of the year 1699 A.D. Sometime before that day Guru Gobind Singh sent 'Hukam-nama' to Sikhs to assemble on Baisakhi Day at Anandpur Sahib. In the large assembly the Guru created 'Panj Piaras' in a special unprecedented way. With a naked sword in his hand he asked if any Sikh is prepared to sacrifice his life for the sake of Dharma and a Sikh came forward who offered his head. As it is well known five Sikhs one by one gave offerings of their lives for the sake of Dharma. At that time the need to save Dharma (Righteousness) was paramount. Guru Nanak had earlier declared "Koi kani raje kaisaly dharan pankh kar udru" meaning that in this dark age of 'Kalyan' the rulers had become butchers and Dharmas had taken wings. God Himself had sent Guru Nanak to reconstitute Dharma through creation of a new religion. 'Kam pukar daur mohi' Guru Nanak jug mohi pathoal.

Guru Nanak therefore had commenced the process to create a new religion to uphold Dharma. Guru Gobind Singh was also sent by God Himself to complete that process for creating a new religion of Khalsa Panth who will uphold Dharma and he indicated the orders of Almighty God to him "Mat apna suti take mawia, Panth parchar karke ko saafhi".

On Baisakhi Day of 1699 A.D. Guru Gobind Singh thus completed the function of completion of new religion by creating 'Panj Piaras' who could lay down their lives to uphold Dharma (righteousness) in the world.

That day another unprecedented occurrence was that the Guru bowed before the 'Panj Piaras' to ask Amrit and received Amrit in the same way as he gave to them. This was the first bringing in India the principle of democracy by which a Guru could bow before his disciples or a ruler could bow before his people.

For completion of the new religion in this way all the ten Gurus played their respective parts. Guru Nanak travelled so extensively in India and other countries of the world as no other Prophet or Avatar had travelled. Guru Arjan Dev and Guru Tegh Bahadur gave sacrifices of their lives.

Guru Gobind Singh sacrificed his sons and parents and then himself all in the process of creation of the new religion to uphold Dharma. The first five Gurus worked to create 'Bhakti' or worship of One God in the Sikhs and the other five Gurus worked mainly to create 'Shakti' or strength in them to uphold Dharma and spread it in the world. In their daily prayer all

How Should We Celebrate BAISAKHI DAY

By : Sardar Isher Singh, New Delhi

Sikhs crave from God Almighty 'Sarbat ka khalsa' which means that they not only wish but have also to work for creation of peace and happiness in the entire world.

To achieve such a laudable objective the Sikh Gurus had also created the necessary infrastructure. The fourth Guru Ram Das ji created Amritsar as the Centre of all Sikhs. The fifth Guru, Arjan Dev ji created the Adi Granth containing 'Bani' and sayings in Praise of One God not only of Sikh Gurus themselves but also of Saints of other religions who also worshipped One all prevailing God.

The sixth Guru, Hargobind ji created Akal Takht at Amritsar as the highest seat of authority for religious and temporal affairs of the Sikhs. Guru Gobind Singh ji, while realising the time of his leaving this world, bowed before the Adi Granth declaring it as the everlasting future Guru of the Sikhs. By then he had already created 'Panj Piaras' who were to take guidance from the universal teachings embodied in Guru Granth Sahib and work as the highest leaders of the Panth from the highest seat of authority, the Akal Takht.

The intentions and orders of the Gurus are abundantly clear that they wanted the spread of Sikhism for creating condition of 'Sarbat ka khalsa' or world peace and happiness amongst all peoples.

However the Sikhs have not so far been able to obey the orders of the Gurus in the matter of creating the Shromani Panj Piaras at Akal Takht Amritsar. The consequences are evident. Whereas some time back a prominent Hindu leader Pandit M. M. Malviya, had said that every Hindu family

should have at least one Sikh, as the Sikhs possessed a lofty character of 'Bhakti' and 'Shakti'. For the same reason of high character witness of a Sikh in a court of law was considered as at such great value as to prove a truth.

However, now a very wrong picture of Sikhs is prevailing in the world. The disunity amongst its leaders and anti-Sikh activities of a small number of Sikh youths, who are being called terrorists, as also the highly unsympathetic attitude of the ruling powers to a small minority community is giving a bad name to the Sikhs.

In these circumstances it has become a matter of almost importance that this year Baisakhi Day should be celebrated in a way to obey the orders of the Gurus and create the leadership of Shromani Panj Piaras at the Sikhs' centre of Amritsar.

In the year 1977, which was the year of celebrating fourth centenary of the creation of Amritsar city an attempt was made to create the required leadership through a detailed plan which was considered essential and published by Sardar Hukam Singh ji, ex-Speaker Lok Sabha and President Kaudri Sri Guru Singh Sabha. That plan besides creating Panj Piaras at Akal Takht also envisaged to push up the progress of Sikh community in matters like Educational, Economic, Social etc and its scope became so wide that it has not so far been implemented.

A revised plan was brought out envisaging that all efforts be made to have the leadership of Panj Piaras at Akal Takht and other masters can be looked into and will become easier there after. Such revised plan has been published in December 1987, by

Gurmat Parchar Trust, New Delhi having Professor Parkash Singh as its President and Sardar Manmohan Singh as its secretary. Its second edition has been brought out in March 1989 under the name "A unique way for World Peace and Happiness" which represents the objective of Sikhism and also describes the way to achieve it.

At present by God's grace the number of Sikhs in the whole world has exceeded two crores and such a number is difficult to be assembled as 'Sarbat Khalsa' for the purpose of selecting five best Sikhs of the whole world as Panj Piaras, but this new plan suggests a very practical way in this matter. Whereas the plan provides for the highest central authority of all Sikhs of the 'World Sikh Sangat', the other Sikh organisations such as Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee managing the Sikh Gurdwaras, the Chief Khalsa Diwan looking into Educational side of the community, various Sikh Foundations and other such organisations can go on performing their functions in their own way. The Central authority having Panj Piaras who could sacrifice their lives for the sake of Panth's interests could still give guidance to the other organisations and could check, wrong policies by issue of 'Hukamnamas' or otherwise.

It has been considered by Gurmat Parchar Trust that in order to implement this plan the first priority should be to give it extensive publicity as possible. Copies of this plan have been supplied to various cities of India as also to countries like America, England, Singapore etc.

For further necessary action efforts were made to open a regular office for the purpose in Gurdwara Rakab Ganj or Gurdwara Bangla Sahib in New Delhi, but pending the grant of permission by Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee Delhi, the office is being started in Guru Nanak Library attached to Gurdwara Akali Phool Sahib, Rajinder Nagar, New Delhi, from 1st April 1989. In this office having telephone number 3710955, Sardar Tunjil Singh, former Principal, Sikh Missionary College, Patiala and now Parcharach attached to Gurmat Parchar Trust, will be on duty daily, from 10 a.m. to 1.30 p.m. to give all necessary information regarding the plan and also providing, on taking, copies of the plan as also of 'Panj Piaras' which are an integral part of this plan.

It is earnestly hoped that all Sikhs will cooperate in this important matter so that we could obey the orders of our Gurus to have a supreme leadership of Panj Piaras and that will be the best way to celebrate Baisakhi Day this year.



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Sikh Response to Conservation of Nature

Professor Gopal Singh Puri is not only one of the leading Ecologists of the world, but he is a serious student of religion and philosophy. Besides he is engaged in discovering healing properties in Nam Simran and Meditation. He writes poetry in Panjabi, English and Urdu. On his last visit to India he was welcomed by the Vice-Chancellor, Panjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana, who released his book—*Khalsa Dua of Panjabi Poetry*.

Professor Puri has just published second volume of his New Series of Forest Ecology—an outstanding work of a Sikh Scientist, who is doing so much for Indian Science, while being abroad, since 1962.

Professor Puri is invited to lecture at various Universities in India and Pakistan in Human Ecology and Moral Ecology, during coming autumn. Interested persons will be able to meet him at N-21, Panchsheel Park, New Delhi. We take pleasure in publishing one of his latest article for our readers.

God made man a guardian of the natural world order. As part and parcel of the ecosystem with other elements in the environment that have made him—the conservation of the forest is deemed to be the conservation of man. Man is both elemental as well as spark of Divine Light that abides in the temple of body. That the destruction of the Temple does hurt the deity cannot and should not be forgotten. Science, technology, ideology has in the past century given unlimited power to man, but Nature is all powerful. Guru Nanak to Jape says *Kuchai Kavas Kaha Vichar*—what power have I to describe Thee is Thine Doctrines? With One word, thou didst effect the world's expansion...

The scientific community of the world and notably organizations of the United Nations have at last realised the gravity of the situation and have made the politicians and religious leaders alike to participate in the vast task of rebuilding and reconstructing Nature and the Natural environment, for posterity.

The Duke of Edinburgh, as President of the World Wild Fund for Nature has recently highlighted the problem Touching upon the new liturgy created to celebrate the alliance between Conservation and Religion launched at Assisi in 1986, he reminded Christians and in fact believers of all religions that—"God has put limits to the endurance of all natural systems. The evidence is mounting that the human species is stretching those limits to the point of breakdown. It is as if we were pushing the life and systems of our rich and varied globe into a winter of death without hope of rebirth and regeneration and without the expectation of Spring—Humanity is a part of the natural order and it is our responsibility to give all life on earth that same chance of renewal and rebirth—Advent should remind us that we have no right to exploit the earth scathingly and ruthlessly. We are partners with

all life on earth and joint beneficiaries of God's gifts of the Life Giving air, water and soil. It should remind us that God did not make us masters of His creation. He expects us to be "guardians" (*The Independent*, 26 November 1988, p. 15). The Sikh view about Nature is very similar. Man himself, now and himself, reaps—by God's order, O Nanak, man comes and goes.

Sikhs Are Lovers of Nature

Sikhs in their historical development, had truly acted as guardians of the environment, as it is a gift of God to man. This faith originated in the Punjab in the 15th century, contemporaneously with the Mughal Rule, and spread to all parts of the country. The founders of the two movements, Babar of the Mughal Empire and Nanak of the Sikh Spiritual power had met and there had been intimate, sometimes a ruffled relationship between the descendants of the two. Both the Mughals and the Sikhs are lovers of Nature, forests, gardens, lakes and landscaped lawns. The Mughal Gardens in Kashmir, and Lahore and the Rani Bagh Gardens developed by Maharaja Ranjit Singh are two notable examples. The British contribution to the beautification of India in the development of company gardens in different parts of the country, is in the same tradition.

The Panjabis and especially the Sikhs are nature lovers. They are professional botanists and conservationists of plant and animal resources. Examples can be given of Sir Datar Singh, M.S. and N.S. Raabwah, and Thapar. They participated wholeheartedly in the Green Revolution and the White (Milk) Revolution and converted the Shrubland Panjab as the breadbasket of India. In the creation of tree plantations in wastelands, along roads, canals, rose gardens, lawns and fruit orchards, villages communities and in urban

husbandry the Panjabis have been second to none.

This work is ingrained in the mind and soul of the Sikhs people through Guru's teachings contained in the Sri Guru Granth Sahib, here referred as Adi Granth (A.G. 580). Lord Himself is the farm, Himself is the farmer. Himself He gaveth and grindeth (the corn). Himself He cooketh. Himself He placeth it on the platter and Himself He eateth it too. Guru Nanak himself was a farmer and he took pride in this profession of looking after cattle, cultivating—also cultivating *Nam* is the field of body.

By this teaching the Sikh institution has imbibed the free community kitchen service for the Sikhs; for Guru says (A.G. 551) He Himself Worships Himself. Himself He Constructeth His Plays (Visible world or the Universe) through *Maya*. He Himself is the Household. Himself is the Detached from the World—. The Sikh is thus instructed to cherish the All Pervading God (*Visvadeva*), the master of the garden of Woods (A.G. 503), in his heart and soul. For *Nam* is the true wealth. *Jata Keta Teta Nam*. By conserving *Nam*, everything is conserved, is the message.

Plant conservation is thus a religious duty, as Kabir (A.G. 476) says to the She Gardner forbidding her the destroying of vegetation for idol worship.—Why tear off the leaves? The leaves too have life.—That the leaf is Brahma, the boughs and flowers are Vishnu and Shiva. Thou breakest the three Gods—To the Muslim, Kabir reminds by implication for water conservation. The Hajj I perform at the banks of the Gomti River, is auspicious to Kabir, as Hajj at Mecca.

Guru Nanak reminds that water is life and as many are the grains of food, not one is without life (A.G. 972). For water conservation the Gurus constructed tanks (sarovars) and made this holy work. These tankars are always stocked with fish and as a holy duty the Sikhs subscribe to the periodical cleaning of tanks of airborne dust, mud, excessive vegetable growth. This *Kar Seva* (service by hands) is partaken by Maharajas, Rajas, noble men, saints and the common citizens, together in Nature conservation, as a religious duty.

Gurus further developed cold-plate and Gurdwaras, temples along the banks of rivers. Meats along the banks of rivers. Meats may be made of Kacchaur by Guru Nanak, Raonta Sahib along and Naader along the Godavari river by Guru Gobind Singh.

Guru Nanak in an encounter with Wali Khandbari, the Muslim saint tore open from the dry limestone rock a fountain of sweet water at Hassan Abdal. For the Guru believed that water is the primal life, which has made all the rest green (*Priya piti hot jy karev gabb koi*). Water in the Sikh faith is life—the ambrosia—the nectar, the nectar.

God, The Creator Of Universe

In the Sikh thought, God alone is the creator of the Universe and man. The Environment in its five elements—Ether, Air, Fire, Water and Earth being part of the whole is as sacred and living as man himself. Guru Nanak in dialogue to the Japji says—*Puran puri pani pita*. Air (like the Guru's wood) gives us the breath of life, Water gives us, earth is our mother. Day and night are the twin nurses that watch over the world and in whose lap we all play. This is an ecological formula of plant and animal growth, development and succession, that was known to the Guru.

In Sri Rag (A.G. 19-20) Guru describes the creation of the Universe and man—*Sukte te pawa bhan*. From the True Lord proceeds the Air and from the Air comes Water. From the water, God created the three worlds and in every heart He infused His Light—God created man's body of five elements dyed in the fire of the True Lord and the True Light shineth to his mind— and leads him to good deeds. But through mind's obstinacy the man of intellect is drowned—and loses peace of mind.

Man is not immortal—He sees in front the fire of death burning the mortal and goes behind the green plume—When they are born, thence do they merge.

In order to survive in the world man is taught to subdue the mind (*eh manm moar*) and become desire free, because the foolish and greedy soul is attached with and lured by greed. One who renounces self worship and self conceit (*Mani re haume chhade gumanan*), because by being materialistic and evil intellect, man continues coming and going and is caught in the cycle of birth and death.

God And His Creation

"God sleeps in the tree, dreams in the animal and wakes in man" is a well-known proverb. It is not for greediness alone that man runs to the forest, mountain, river valley. Buddha says that "Forest is a peculiar organism of uncollected kindness and honey-sweet that makes no demand for

its sustenance, and extends protection to all beings, offering shade even to the axeman who destroys it." Forest is an ecosystem, which is the shade of man. Forest is that Garden of Eden which has nurtured man. To kill the forest is to kill the whole ecosystem, including man himself, is clear enough but modern Taibocracy has ruthlessly massacred living and throbbing forests for greed and lust.

The destruction of forests worldwide is a phenomenon of this passing century. The Amazon, the Irrawaddy, the Ganges, the Nile, even the Thames Valley, have grievously suffered from the cruel onslaught of man's greed for the destruction of forest as one present or another may it be Modernisation, Urbanisation, Industrialisation, Landscaping, safety, sanitation or taming of nature. The forest has hit back, for deforestation has brought disasters to the world's population in the form of silting of river valleys, the flooding of rivers and serious drought, the loss of crops, destruction of wildlife, the desertification etc. All these can be mentioned as some of the man-made disasters. These are no less eco-disasters than eruptions of volcanoes, mudflows, lightning, fire or earth-quakes. Deforestation has changed the whole environment of Man and animals—some places, irrevocably. With the destruction of forests environment, is lost beautiful life, with its birds, ducks, crocodiles, deer, lion, tigers and the beneficial microfauna and flora. The list is rapidly increasing of the extinct and endangered species of plants, animals, insects.

Forest civilisations of the past, the aborigines, the Todas, the Red Indians, in every continent have suffered from the greed of the 20th century man, for more and more urbanisation of its population in the wake of forest destruction. This is the rage of destructive forces gaining a win over the Creator's Will. This tyranny against nature is the classic example of man practising shortsightedness and hastening the destruction of its own species. Such an idea of victory over nature is the biggest defeat that man has ever received at his own hands. Guru says—*Kulug roth agan ha koor agay rathevala*—The present age is the chariot of uncontrolled fire, with false values as charioteers.

Nature Destruction

So far as the subcontinent of India is concerned I can certify from personal experience over half a century that man has outstripped his limits in mis-treating the natural environment.

While preparing the revised edition of my 1960 book on Forest Ecology, I discovered to

my horror that photographs taken of certain forest formations could not be repeated in 1985 as they had disappeared in a span of less than a quarter of a century. India was once rich in forests, where proverbially rivers of milk and honey flowed to make the life of the poor and the rich alike, heavenly blissful. Long ago, however, deserts and wilderness had engulfed cities of Harrappa and Mohenjodaro through forest destruction through foreign invasions and India's neglect of their resources.

Vedas were written on the banks of North Indian rivers, where under thick canopies of evergreen forests Rishis and Seers used to meditate on the Lord and his gifts to man. Vedic hymns have recorded the glory that was Hind. The Buddhist, Jain and Hindu temples once built in the midst of forests are now in the centre of wilderness, succumbing to erosion and corrosion of elements.

It has been estimated that as much as 175 million hectares of our land area has degenerated due to mainly soil erosion, water

logging and salinity. Thus the consequence of such erosion is some 6000 million tonnes of loss of top soil, amounting to nutrient loss of the order of Rs. 700 crores, much more than the total capacity of fertiliser plants in the century.

The present political map of India has roughly 15% of the world's population living on 2.5% of the total land area. The annual increase in population is estimated at about 12 million, with a daily birth rate of over 58,000 and deaths of 25,000 thus daily 33,000 mouths to be fed, clothed, sheltered, educated and habited on the ever-decreasing natural resources of water, soil, nutrients and forests.

What is true of India is true of the world today. Unprecedented Eco-disasters like desertification, floods, storms, hurricanes, droughts, famines, epidemics, are taking toll of human life, cattle, houses, factories and the like all over the world. The world over, 12 million hectares of forests are estimated to be lost every year and at this rate forests of the globe are estimated to last for only 60 to 65 years.

In 10 years (1951-1980) India is estimated to have lost a total of 1.8 million of forests. It is estimated that about 20 hectares of forests are axed every minute, about other losses depriving fodder for bulk of the livestock population in the country, now estimated to be over 400 million.

Recurrence of floods in the country as elsewhere is generally related to reduction in forests cover. In 1981-130 districts in 17 states and two union territories were affected by floods. A cropped area of 1.62 million hectares was affected; about 22,42 thousand houses were partially or totally damaged and 45,300 heads of cattle were lost and property worth about 44,791 million of Rupees was destroyed. Current figures for losses during 1986, 87, 88 eco-disasters for India, Pakistan and Bangladesh are much more alarming.

The destruction of forests in India as elsewhere has gone apace with intensification of agriculture, grassland husbandry, urban development, industrial expansion all over the world. Tropical forest and environments are fast disappearing, with its characteristic flora and fauna, disturbing world climate and destroying the ecosystem. Industrial development with high power technology, coal, oil and nuclear power has added a new dimension of pollution in the environment already becoming fragile by armament experiments on earth and in space by warring nations. Pollution now causes universal harm not only to air, water, soil, but also to human health and welfare.

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of the 30's brought the importance of ecology and co-conservation. The ancient civilisations of Babylonia, Egypt, China and India had all faced destructions in the same way through the hand of man himself. Our future faces problems of population (increasing and ageing), pollution, poverty, politics and power (energy and organic resources).

Environmental Pollution

The Unesco Man and Biosphere research on environmental pollution and its effects on the Biosphere in its 1986 meeting has shown that atmospheric CO_2 content of the atmosphere has been increasing through the burning of fossil fuels and from deforestation and oxidation of soil carbon from 260 ppm to present 340 ppm. Energy projection for the future suggest that around year 2000 AD a level of 370 ppm and about 650 ppm around the second half of the century would produce a global warming of 1.5 to 4.5°. This would produce a major shift in global plant formation. It may cause a vertical disappearance of boreal climates and almost doubling of the area of tropical climates.

The greenhouse effect may cause a rise of one meter sea, and consequent flooding and submerging low lying coastal areas all over the world. CO_2 enhances plant growth, but differently for different plants. Most weeds would compete better with crops of maize, rice and oats. Higher temperatures will also stimulate dramatically fungal and bacterial and insect pests diseases. Fresh water resources of the world in river basins and lakes may be adversely affected. We are aware of all this through our experience of Arid lands, humid tropics and dry steppe lands.

In 1960 arid and semi-arid regions covered made them one third of the land surface of the earth, when population was 2700 million. This area, in spite of reclamation has increased with population almost doubling to 5 billion.

Acidification of land and fresh water ecosystems destroying plant and animal life and causing human diseases has been increasing since 1900 due to excessive industrial development. Emission of sulphur dioxide has tripled. Nitrogen oxide increased 6 to 7 fold. Over 90% of all anthropogenic sulphur dioxide emissions are in the Northern Hemisphere. Apart from smog, nitrate deposition affects forests, soils and lakes through acidification and eutrophication. Fish and other water life suffers as a result of air pollution.

The list of environmentally dangerous chemicals in use by industry has been increasing rapidly and some of these are

causing grave concern to the human population. Especially the radioactive fall out, CO , CO_2 , SO_2 , NO_2 , DDTs, PCBs etc. are all ultimately major human health hazards. The biotic effects of radiation can be somatic, genetic and ecological. The nuclear war could bring about devastating effects on human and social systems not only by destroying forestry and agricultural fertility systems but causing the death of billions of people through starvation.

The ozone layer has also been adversely affected. The CO_2 induced greenhouse effect will be paralleled by the combined greenhouse effect of ozone with other trace gasses. The decrease in atmospheric ozone will cause more solar penetration UV radiation in the land and ocean, causing damage of human health and many other organisms. Human health is influenced by UV-B radiation by the formation of vitamin D 3, sunburn, eye diseases, immunological changes, photo-allergic reactions, and skin diseases, including skin cancer to light skin people.

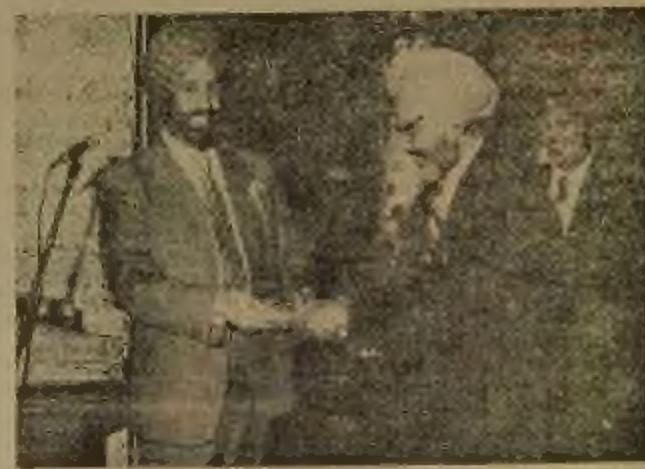
The warm Christmas week this year in England, some believe is the first effect of the Greenhouse effect. The weather has already begun to show a warming effect.

Sikh Faith On Nature Of Universal Phenomenon

The Sikh faith realises and appreciates the fact that our Universe is entropy. It came into being with a big bang and created life as negentropy. So far to evolutionary sequence human being has emerged as the best negentropic organism, on account of the highly developed consciousness, memory, speech and a coordinated working of the faculty of thought, speech and action.

Guru Nanak accepting the big bang theory described in *Mara* (A.G. 1035) under the arduous burden *duhkh kara* by the creation of the Universe by God—as follows:—Through unaccountable ages, complete darkness brooded over water voidancy. There were no worlds, no firmaments. The Will of God was alone pervasive. There was neither night nor day, nor moon but only God in ceaseless trance—

There were no living bodies and souls—There was no object of contemplation, No object of knowledge—When he Willed, He shaped the Universe—Without a prop to support it—He created the high God—Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. And *Maya* the Goddess, the Veil of illusion, who maketh Truth dark and increaseth worldly attachments. To some, to a chosen few, the Guru revealeth the Lord's Word's. The Lord creates and He watcheth His Creation. He made the heavenly



Professor Gopal Singh Puri (left) being welcomed by the Vice Chancellor Panjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana Dr S.S. Bains Dean of the Sciences is behind the Vice-Chancellor.

bodies. Our Universe is endless space, and above and around it. And out of the Unknowable ground of His Being, To us and in us, He made Himself manifest.

This story of Creation of Guru Nanak envisages that the Whole comes out of the Whole and the Whole is still the Whole. It signifies growth, development and evolution of matter from the spirit and from inanimate according to the laws of nature. Although, the development of mother nature (*nāmāk*) is through maya, the great ego (*Haumai*). It is shadow of the substance. Only soul is immortal, the spirit in the matter (*Mann* or *ji* *krupai* *hai*, A.G. 441), all else is destined to come and go.

Thus death is the gift given to the organism on truth *Io Rāj Māj Ki Yer* (A.G. 143) Guru says—The grave lies at the end of the road for all living things. For the Master and His disciples, for the prophets and for the kings. The greatest of the earth are creatures of the moment that passeth. Thou alone art! Thou alone art! All creatures are mortal. Our Universe is also mortal as neither the lunar nor the solar spheres, nor the dry land nor the waters over the earth, nor the air nor the moving winds in the infinite space shall endure for ever (A.G. 144). But where there is death, there is life.

The Mortal World

All living things in the world, O Lord, are Thine aid they wither and die. The withering is described as gradual weakening of human faculties. In the and the mortal ones—Dust is the light of my eye. My tongue moveth but feebly. My ears have lost their hearing. My legs cannot move without a crutch. This is what comes of human life, when one does not serve God (A.G. 354), and follow the laws laid down by Him to use His gifts.

We are living today in a sick society. In Britain alone 30 million subscriptions are written by GPs for tranquillisers, anti-depressants, sleeping pills. There are 8 million Rheumatic sufferers; 5 million phobic people who fear of anything. Mind predicts that 1 in 5 men and 1 in 9 women would die during their lifespan help from mental health services. Smoking, alcohol, drug addition have never decreased in spite of education. More and more fatal diseases like AIDS, and Leukemia are threatening the very life of humanity, along with coronary and cancer.

We live in constant stress of death and destruction, in spite of the great material wealth, comfort and opportunity created by science and technology. But our soul always thirsts for something more precious than a standard of living and the standard of dying. Aristotle says—Happiness is the result of virtuous activity. Whatever else, humanity today is short of Happiness, Health and Harmony and above all holiness without which life is a hollow read.

World Is Wonderful

Guru Nanak talks of the World's elements, creatures, humanity all created by God, in *Asa di war* (463 A.G.) in a variety of ways:—True are Thy worlds, True are Thy Universes. True are Thy Lokas (divisions of the Universe)—True are Thy doings, True is Thy command. True is Thy court—Great is Thy Glory—For Thou knowest our speech—Great is Thy Glory, for Thou divinest our inner thoughts—Wonderful is the sound (*Nād*). Wonderful is the Wisdom (*Vedas*)—Wonderful is Life—Wonderful are distinctions—Wonderful is form! Wonderful is colour. Wonderful is the air, Wonderful the water. Wonderful the species. Wonderful is the life

—Wonderful the tastes that lure away life—Wonderful the Hunger. Wonderful is the enjoyment.

Pollution Is Sinful

Over exploitation, pollution or misuse of these environmental constituents are thus immoral in Sikh Theology. For the Guru proceeds—that our good as well as our bad deeds (with respect to Environment or Life forces) shall be read His Judgement. As we have acted, some of us shall be near God and some of us far away—

The relationship between Environment and organisms including man is reciprocal. Environment A provides organisms B and this in turn becomes Environment A I to produce organisms B2. The whole cyclic process of gradual evolutionary change is the development of the Ecosystem, in which there is a free flow on along channels of energy and matter. Any disturbance in this relationship by man, animals or natural phenomena disturbs the flow of energy and matter, thereby decreasing the overall production capacity. The ecosystem in its natural state is a balanced one and the imbalance or disruption is the action against the Will, Order or Grace of God. It is this train of thought that the epilogue ends with the warning that—Those who have meditated on the Holy Name (or have faithfully carried out their duties towards the Environment) and have departed, their task completed. Their faces are those of the shining ones and O, Monk how many they bring to liberty in their train !

For the relationship between the organisms and Environment is of Love, Kindness, Respect and caring for one another. This Love is Life. Guru Nanak instructs man (A.G. 59) that—Let thy love be that of the lotus for the pool. Though ripples shakes the lotus and torment it. It bowereth and loveth ever more the waters. Let thy love be that of the fish for the water, without which it perishes. —Love God as the Chatrik bird loveth the raindrops. Rivers in spate and the uplands drenched are of no avail to the Chatrik bird. Nothing but the raindrops can quench its thirst—Love God as water loves milk. The water must suffer (when heated) must evaporate before the heat can touch the milk—Love God as the Steldrake in the fable loves the sun. It sleepeth not for a moment. At night when it cannot see, it considers the Beloved, who is close to be so far away—

This ecological relationship is of Action—Reaction; cause—effect and the Guru warns that—As a man sows, so shall he reap—that which the Lord ordaineth must come to pass—God is the

separation, God is the joicer.—He alone knows the suffering of fish separated from the waters.

In going against the Will of God in treatment of Environment, man must suffer, however powerful, resourceful and great the man may be. For it is made clear that—Noble birth and great fame are as worthless as dust—A man may boast to man of his own goodness. But the truth about him will be known in God's presence (A.G. 83).

God is benevolent to all beings—man, animals, birds or bees—Behold the birds of the air. They build no granaries. They construct no tanks of water. They depend on the forest trees and on the natural ponds. The Lord provideth them all. Thou alone art ! (A.G. 145).

In this Universe of space and Time nothing is immortal—The grave lies at the end of the road for all living things—prophets, masters, disciples, kings, gods, demigods—even dry land, waters over the earth, moving winds shall not endure. Man has to use a great caution in the use of natural resources, flow resources, inorganic resources and organic resources, human resources, and act as the guardian rather than destroyer. Lust, selfishness, and

anger destroys the Universe. Guru Nanak is wonderstruck with the beauty, harmony, goodness, truth of the Universal phenomena. He says the firmament is thy silver. The sun and moon Thy lamp. The galaxy of stars are as pearl's scattered. The woods of sandal trees are Thine essence. The breezes blow Thy royal fan. The flowers of the forests lie as offering at Thy feet —In ecstasy he says—What wonderful worship with lamp is this—All this is Thy play and bewitches me. In every heart is Light That Light art Thou. By the Light that is of God Himself is every soul illuminated. Isn't it sin against Humanity, Universe and God to pollute, disrupt, dismember and destroy such an ecosystem ? For the death of the environment is the death of man himself, is no doubt.

God pervades in His creation and He has created all the worlds for His own delight (A.G. 433), warns the human soul addressing it as black buck—Listen to me—Why dost thou crave to break into the fenced-off fields ? The delight of cropping forbidden—herbage lasteth but for a few days. Thereafter there is sorrow in store. Sorrow is the wages of sin—

—O my soul, thou honeybee—

buzzing around the blossoms to rifle their secrets thy sorrow is great—O honey bee thou art lost in worldly flowers. When the sun rises after death thy soul will suffer a body scolded by oil—Without the Word of the Guru (True Knowledge) Man is stupid and cannot find his way. He dieh and for ever suffereth agony—

The bookish knowledge is of no use. The misuse of the knowledge leads to destruction. For the Guru says—A man will by his actions and deeds be judged and known good or bad—The self and beautiful will suffer agonizing blows (A.G. 463-75)—The sinner's lot is but to weep as of such a person Guru says—I wept and the world wept with me. The birds of the forest also wept, but my soul in separation wept not—(A.G. 557). Although Truth is higher than all, higher still is the life lived in Truth (A.G. 62). The right action is more important than the mere Truth in principle.

Conservation Is Work For God

The Muslim name of Man is for God means Bliss-giver Soi Meula jin jug maula haria kia sanaro (Sri Rag M. 1, A.G. 24). He is the Bliss-giver (Mower) who has made World blossom and evergreen of the Universe. Hail unto the Creator who has kept in bondage water and land.

The name Hari, Har also means greenery. Chlorophyll is the basis of life with L. Light. It fixes CO₂ of the atmosphere and water to form simple molecule HCOOH. Life flourishes as green plants with the abundance of both these constituents. It is no wonder that Light is elevated to such a high place as Guru. The meaning of the word is the Enlightener—the one that leads from darkness to Light. One is reminded of the Vedic hymns—Lead us from the darkness to Light, from death to immortality. Har and Har Nam is mentioned in the Adi Granth in a variety of ways for over 10,000 times in the 1430 pages. Greenery is of such vital importance in material as well as spiritual life of the Sikh people that any destructive ideology is shunned.

Har spiritual greenery is the gift of the Lord (Har) for Guru Nanak says in Sri Rag (A.G. 23) that Wealth, Youth and flowers are guests only for four days and like leaves of waterlilies they wither and finally die away. The advice is to take heed of youth and energy to perpetuate the greenery for eternity for the aim of life is the vision of the Lord and the merging of drop in the Ocean and beam of light with the Sun.

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The Raagi Jatha Racket

By : Bhagwan Singh Dalawari, Tapovan, Amritsar

In February the memory of martyrs Lachman and Dalip stirred me to look into myself where I am. And then I think of April, of Baisakhi day, when the Five Beloveds (who were to be decapitated afterwards) decided to respond to the call of the Master to offer their heads for Righteousness. Bhai Daya Singh, Bhai Dharam Singh, Bhai Hammal Singh, Bhai Mohkam Singh and Bhai Sabit Singh stood guarantee for me that if I wish to become the Khalsa of Guru Gobind Singh, my head will always remain on my spine to be offered for sacrifice anytime it is desired by the Guru. This is what swift ceremony means.

And yet these distinguished persons will continue to have a special place because they had no guidelines, they had no lessons laid down except of course the martyrdom of Guru Arjan, Guru Tegh Bahadur and the accompanying Sikhs like Mati Das, Sati and Diala. But there was a difference. These great martyrs willingly offered themselves for a place at the gallows when the circumstances specifically demanded.

Let Baisakhi awaken us; let the memory of the 'Panj Piare' chisel in us conscientious assessment of ourselves.

The call of Master Guru Gobind Singh was more drastic. Their heads were required to be cut off just because the Guru wanted it; they had not been asked to sacrifice themselves for a cause; they were desired to be killed because Guru wanted to kill death, kill the fear of death and make them liberated.

Indeed the first of the Khalsa Brotherhood did not know it and yet offered to die in faith for the Master because they knew Master would give them a new life in new splendour.

And as I think of these great forerunners in the awe of admiration, I have the nauseating feelings about the present day Raagi Jathas, who have become more greedy, more commercialised, more dehumanised than even the ordinary worldly man. And they live in Gurbanis; but donor live it in their lives. They are becoming the worst examples of what a Sikh should not be.

Show me examples may be there but I am shrinking within myself to bear that a raagi-jatha whose Kiran is listened to with devotion and the head of which gives kynshik of a very high order exhorting others to Abun Maya and Maya Do Mok has demanded—and his demand has been accepted—Rs. 14,000/- for a few

days Kiran in Nagpur. This was mentioned to me by a respectable member of the Committee which sanctioned it despite his protest.

I have known and heard the Raagi Jathas demanding like Shylock in Merchant of Venice (Shakespeare) their pound of flesh, even when they are paid heavily. I know at least of one case where a raagi-jatha had taken a lot of money from the main gurdwara and when another gurdwara a little away from the town had asked for one kirat, even in lieu of the one to be cancelled in the main gurdwara, the jatha refused to perform, unless another Rs. 1500/- was shelled out.

Why I have juxtaposed Panj Piare against the present-day carriers of the message of Gurus is to wake up the Khalsa and see its own degeneration heralded by the degeneration of our Raagi-Jathas and Kathakars who love

money more than the life-rooted-in-gurbani.

I wish we delve into ourselves on this Baisakhi and try to find out why, even in the face of the most glorious preaching and practice and a permanent universal example of purity, truth and love in the form of Guru Granth Sahib our perpetual Guru, we have gone down the drain.

The tragedy of our times is that the same raagi-jathas, the same kathakars, the same speakers who advise us about the mortality of our existence, about the uselessness of wealth and about truth and honesty, indulge in most questionable methods to collect money, to coerce the committees and the sangat.

It is an ugly sight to see all the bags of harmoniums placed in any gurdwara, at any stage and on every occasion, be that of death or marriage, heaps of notes. The message of Gurbani is always contradicted by the tricks of such people. Let us see how the tricks work.

(i) Raagi-jathas do not believe but say that all this money is in form of *sakar* of Bank; actually it amirs the jatha as well as the sangat because neither of them wish to digest the message of Gurbani and practice it

in real life. The sangat itself drooled to many feels relieved to part with money—many times, it may be drawn from the almsbox which carries black money at home—in the belief that it has become *sharif* by paying some money and not the head as demanded by the Guru and the Raagi-jatha is satisfied that a lot of money has been earned.

(ii) Just as in other commercialised centralisation, now there are centres of Raagi-Jatha introductions. One has to negotiate just as one negotiates a business deal. Neither the negotiator is serious about Gurbani living, because he is the Secy/President of a Gurdwara because of his big wine business or position in the society not because of his Sikh-like living, nor is the Raagi-Jatha serious about the spreading the message of Truth, Humility and Love of our Gurus.

Thus the negotiations centre on money and the class of travel, i. Class, Air Coordinated or By Air.

(iii) Instead of cultivating more humility and more devotion, if one's singing has become popular and in stead of trying to live the dictates of our Masters, the Raagi-Jathas raise their prices like ordinary commercial wheeler-dealers and extract the price asked for, even if the committee initially expresses its inability. After all even the Committee is not wasting its own money; the public money is thrown to these vulchers in the belief that the value of the President/Secretary is enhanced in proportion to the number and quality of the singers invited, irrespective of the expenditure incurred.

(iv) Once the Raagis arrive, they expect to be treated as fragile—handle with care, instead of giving themselves as examples of Sikh life, they boast on their idiosyncrasies accepted. Their hunger for money is not satisfied with the enormous amount settled for the visit but their eyes are always on the money to be collected from the sangat. Thus one of five mighty thieves, greed, is seen in stark evidence.

When the programmes are

over, there is always a bad taste in the mouth so far as the Committees are concerned. Let me give you some eye-witness accounts of programmes at some places.

a) A few years ago I was present at the celebrations at Hazur Sahib of Guru Granth Sahib Gurdwara and many raagi-jathas, kathakars, kawals, singers and others were invited. After listening to all these personalities for three days, I asked the organisers whether they generated healthy spiritual influence. And, I asked whether the person concerned, particularly the raagi-jatha and the kathakars gave the impression of respect for and desire in living the word of the Guru. The reply was: *Keha na poache* (Please don't ask anything) and added: *Eham de andar ho ja* (Don't go into their lives!). I do not know what that meant but that did leave me wondering whether commercialised, money-oriented means that we organise to celebrate our Gurupurbas are justified.

b) Some months ago, a raagi-jatha landed in Amritsar gurdwara along with a kathakar who had gone elsewhere and were brought here by someone from here who attended the function there. On the day of their departure, when some money was paid to them, there was intense boggling because although they had come in connection with a marriage they had performed kirtan and kaths in the gurdwara for a few days. I waited for them to show them Tapovan but their waiting extended upto 2 hours because the organisers and the jathas could not come to agreements over money to be paid to them.

c) In Jalandhar, a kathakar had been imposed on the sangat on Guru Nanak's birthday last year but someone who had been doing katha there for some years and the kathakar expected to be paid. Besides, other jathas made peculiar demands like tax-collectors.

d) I have heard about it but not witnessed it. At Kirtan Darbars in Delhi, many renowned raagis are happy to be called for popularity or publicity but when the organisers give them a fixed sum like Rs. 2100 or Rs. 1500, the more distinguished ones insist they would not take a penny less than Rs. 2500/-.

e) We now hold meetings of raagi, kirtanis, qawals, kathakars with the avowed purpose of spreading of gurbani but the apparent and real motives are introductions or further

commercialisation. What reigns supreme at these mela is money, and money and not the sacred participation of the sangat in devotion to the Guru and Gurubani. The organisers can't even manage proper distribution of langar.

Let us ask ourselves on the Baisakhi Day of 1989 is this the purpose of our Guru who created Khalsa and in building up the pillars of Sikhism sacrificed his father and his four sons? We have it as the authority of the Guru Granth Sahib that without truthful conduct money cannot be hoarded and can we, in all sincerity, indulge in all this commercialised exhibitionism with hard-earned Dharam-Kirti? It is time we enquired from ourselves whether we want to remain Naam Dhareek (showpieces in Name) Sikhs or we want to acquire the qualities of the five beliefs and the four Sahibzadas of Guru Gobind Singh?

If we do want to come out of the blind alley that we have our selves gone in by external adherence to Guru Granth Sahib and internal dwelling in Maya, we must do some introspection. For example, the whole world can now see that—

—our leaders—and I dare naming them like Tohra, Talwandi, Barnala, Jaginder Singh Palta, and others are not for the Panth but for themselves. We have already had enough laughing-at and it is time we understood that—

—turbans and beards do not necessarily make us the Khalsa or the Sikhs of our Gurus;

—external slogan-mongering and backbiting are not the qualities of internally aligned Sikhs to the feet of the Guru;

—fearful self-aggrandizement are not the attributes of the selfless Khalsa that the Guru created;

—it is proved that blaming of external forces always for our internal erosion was wrong, confused and a ploy to ward off examination of our leaders' over-zealinated karsi-inspired advance with gurdwara positions as stepping stones; and

—incalculable harm has been done to the institution of the Khalsa by these backbiting leaders, who do not live on the principles of the Khalsa with God's Name in their hearts and love in their psyche but who do not mind involving Guruhi and Akal Takht in their machinations.

Let our leaders and our sangat always remember that they have been leading us into the Ghar Andher (stark darkness) from which the Gurus with their sacrifices and the Sikhs of yore with

their soulful devotion had taken us out.

Do we wish to be remembered as the invincible Khalsa as Guru Gobind Singh envisaged or do we proclaim to the world that our entire system of devotion and love, truth and humility has given way to internal chicanery and money-dominated commercialisation which had never given us peace?

The other day we had an American *sardar*, who is the disciple of an Indian Guru. Her spiritual level was visible to the extent that she was the Editor of a reputable magazine which is part of an important Health centre in Senate (USA) but is never of the

world in that she lives in devotion for three hours a day. If a vegetarian, does her duties towards her husband and her daughter but it is 24-hour presence of her Guru. On watching her devotion, I sighed to notice how we had degenerated.

A very respectable Sikh personality told me the other day that he was embarrassed when an American friend of his visited important Gurdwaras and asked why these *golaks* in the Gurdwaras had to be locked and then locks sealed too. He had to be told the truth and the truth is that we, jathedars, are unpredictable, we can be stealing money. In any case we are on record with colour pictures of fighting and removing turbans of each

other in Gurdwaras as also of gun-toting in Gurdwaras.

Alas! Thousand pities! *Apni Jakh Aap Upothe* now applies to us.

Let Baisakhi awaken us; let the memory of the *Punj Pure* chisel in us consciousness assessment of ourselves. Our religion is of peace, truth, humility, service and sacrifice (with resistance to tyranny and defense of the weak with violence if all legitimate efforts fail) but our own leaders and our own congregations have brought it down to commercial wheeling-dealing, politicos' chicanery, dishonesty denoting *ult vand khet ko khar*.

Shall we now wake up from our deep slumber?

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Wilkins' description of the Patesh Gurdwara in 1781 A.D.

"The Prayed Against Temptation, for Grace to do Good, for General Good to Mankind"

By : Dr. Kirpal Singh, Chandigarh

Charles Wilkins was one of the pioneering Orientalists of the 18th century. With his help Sir William Jones, founder of Asiatic Society, Calcutta learned Sanskrit. Later on Wilkins earned the title of "Father of Sanskrit" in eyes of his contemporaries by writing Grammar of Sanskrit language. He was the first to design and manufacture the type for production of Sanskrit and Persian grammars and proved to be the pioneer in the typographic art in oriental languages.

Born in 1749 A.D. in England, Wilkins joined the service of East India Company at the age of twenty. He suggested to the Governor General Warren Hastings, to establish printing press in 1770. Wilkins translated Marmavirat, Mahabharat, and Hittopadesa and the later years of his life were devoted to the revision of Richardson's Dictionary, Persian, Arabic and English. He died in 1836 in England.

Charles Wilkins was one of the earliest Europeans to write about the Sikhs. He wrote on 1st March 1781, "Before I left Calcutta a gentleman with whom I chanced to be discoursing of that sect of people who are distinguished from worshippers of Brahma and Jugglers of the Mohamedans by the appellation Sikhs informed me that there was a considerable number of them settled in the city of Patna." Since he was proceeding on leave to Benares he stopped at Patna. Following are his observations:

Description of the Place

I found the College of the Sikhs situated in one of the narrow streets of Patna, at not very considerable distance from the custom house. I was permitted to enter the outward gate but as I came to the steps which led up into the Gospel, or public hall, I was civilly accosted by two of the Sikhs, I asked them if I might ascend into the hall. They said it was a place of worship open to me and to all men; but at the same time, intimated that I must take off my shoes. I did not hesitate to comply, and I was then politely conducted into the hall, and seated upon a carpet, in midst of the assembly, which was so numerous as almost to fill the room.

The Congregation

"The congregation arranged themselves upon the carpet, on each side of the hall, so as to leave a space before the altar from end to end. The great book, was brought, with some little

ceremony from the altar, and placed at the opposite extremity of the hall. An old man, with a severed silver beard, kneeled down before the desk with his face towards the altar; and on one side of him sat a man with a small drum, and two or three with cymbals. The book was now opened, and the old man began to chant to the tune of the drum and the cymbals; and, at the conclusion of every verse, most of the congregation joined chorus in a response, with countenances exhibiting great marks of joy. Their tones were by no means harsh; the time was quick; and I learn that the subject was Hymn in praise of the unity, the omnipresence and the omnipotence, of the Deity. I was singularly delighted with the gestures of the old man; I never saw a countenance so expressive of joyful joy, whilst he turned about from one to another, as it were, by speaking their names to those truths which his very soul seemed to be engrossed in chanting forth. The Hymn being concluded, which consisted of about twenty verses, the whole congregation got up, and presented their faces with joined hands towards the altar, in the attitude of prayer. A young man now stood forth, and, with a loud voice and distinct accent, solemnly pronounced a long prayer, or kind of liturgy, at certain periods of which all the people joined in a general response, saying 'Wa Goro. They prayed against temptation; for grace in good; for the general good of mankind; and a particular blessing to the Sikhs; and for the safety of those who at that time were on their travels. This prayer was followed by a short blessing from the old man, an intimation in the assembly to partake of a friendly feast. The book was then closed and restored to its place at the altar.

The Holy Pudding

The two men entered bearing a large iron caldron, called a buri, just taken from the fire, and placed it in the centre of the hall upon a low stool. These were followed by others with five or six dishes, some of which were of silver and a large pile of leaves sewed together with fibres, in the form of plates. One of these plates was given to each of the company without distinction; and the dishes being filled from the caldron, their contents were served out till every one had got his share. Myself was not forgotten and, as I was resolved not to give them the smallest occasion

rewarded and vice punished; (I forgot to ask in what manner). That it not only commands universal toleration, but forbids disputes with those of another persuasion. That it forbids murder, theft, and such other deeds as are, by the majority of mankind, esteemed crimes, against society; and inculcates the practice of all the virtues, but particularly an universal philanthropy, and I next inquired why they were called Sikhs, and they told me it was a word borrowed from one of the commandments of their founder, which signifies "Learn Thou," and that it was adopted to distinguish the sect.

Sikh Ceremonies

I asked them what were the ceremonies in admitting a proselyte. A person having shown a sincere inclination to renounce his former opinions, to any five or more Sikhs assembled together, in any place, as well on the highway as in a house of worship, they send to the first shop where sweetmeats are sold, and procure a small quantity of a particular sort, which is very common, and, as I re-collect, they call Batase, and having diluted it in pure water, they anoint some of it on the body, and into the eyes of the convert; whilst one of the best instructed repeats to him, in any language with which he is conversant, the chief canons of their faith, extracting from him a solemn promise to abide by them the rest of his life. They offered to admit me into their society, but I declined the honor, contending myself with the alphabet, which they told me to guard as the apple of my eye, as it was a sacred character. I find it differs but little from the Devnagur, the Number, order, and powers, of the letters are exactly the same. The language itself is a mixture of Persian, Arabic, and some Sanskrit, grafted upon the provincial dialect of Punjab, which is a kind of Hindooes.



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D P R. HARYANA

Dr Gurkhan Chand Narang, an eminent Arya Samaj leader and historian of pre-partition days, has stated "The harvest which ripened in the time of Guru Gobind Singh was sown by Guru Nanak and watered by his successors. The sword which earned the Khalsa's way to glory was, undoubtedly forged by Gobind, but the steel had been provided by Nanak".

In the north-western part of India Baisakhi brings the wheat harvest. The farmers busy themselves in collecting the fruits of their labour during the previous six months. They are happy and jubilant. For the Sikhs Baisakhi has its particular and special importance. On this very day Tenth Master had introduced the baptism of the double-edged sword (*Khanda*) and established the Order of the Khalsa. Khalsa is the final product of Sikhism, jewel par excellence.

The Guru had sent special messages to his disciples to come for the festival. He pitched his tent. When he came out to address the audience he had a sword in his hand and demanded a sacrifice. People had their misgivings and fears, some even doubted the sanity of the Guru.

Ultimately, one person offered himself at the altar of devotion. The Guru took him inside the tent and people heard noise of the sword and a thud. He came out with a dripped sword and demanded another sacrifice. Now, the people had no doubt that the Guru had actually killed the first person. Many started leaving.

THE KHALSA

A unique creation of Guru Gobind Singh

By : G.S. Chadha, Advocate

Still another person offered himself. The call was repeated five times, every time with the same result. After a while the five and the Guru came out, attired in new uniforms, to the surprise of everyone. These five persons, belonging to different castes but merged in one were called *Panj Piaras* (Five Beloveds).

Thus starting with these Five beloveds the Guru created a formidable force that stood against the worst tyranny of the Mughal empire and the marauders like Ahmad Shah Durrani. The people who joined the Khalsa came from all the castes, the poor and the down-trodden. Those who had never dared to touch a sword were able to face the Afghan hordes in the battle field with astonishing results. This is the real miracle that the Guru had produced.

The resources at the command of the Guru were meagre but his was a just cause. He made the people understand that the power of spirit is unbearable by any tyrant. An individual who joins the Khalsa fraternity vows to live an honest, chaste and productive life. He has to live and work in the world but still remain pure.

Out of the Five-beloveds one

was Khatri (Daya Ram of Lahore), who became Daya Singh, Dharan Das (A jat of Delhi), Mokhda Chand, a washerman of Deccan, Saini Chand a barber of Bidar and Hammal, a porter from Jagannath. The Guru had made them saint-soldiers, who always fought for the cause of justice. He had uttered "Guru Nanak found only one devout disciple Angad, to transmit his spiritual fire, but I am lucky in having the Five Beloveds ones, who shall lay the foundation of the Khalsa by treading on the path of saints as well as soldiers. Since Nanak, it is the 'Charanamrit' which is being administered to the devotees, but from now on, I shall baptise them with water stirred with a dagger and change my Sikhs to Singhs (Lions) and with this transformation they shall obtain empire in this world and this hereafter".

These five were imposed as the first band of saint-soldiers after taking "Amrit". After administering Amrit to them the Guru himself begged from them his own initiation into the Order of the Khalsa. The memorable words of the Guru that "Khalsa is Guru and the Guru is the Khalsa" amply prove in what high esteem

the Guru held his followers. In the *Bachitar-Natak* (Wonderous drama-Guru Ji's autobiography) he had himself said "My wish was not at all to come away from Hemkunt mountains, where I was meditating and my mind was focused on the feet of the Almighty, but He made known to me His desire. Thus spoke the Lord Almighty—

"I bless these as my son, and appoint thee to extend religion,

Go and spread my religion, and restrain the world wayward ways."

Then again he said

"Whoever calls me the Supreme Being, shall suffer in hell,

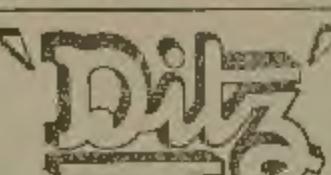
Recognise me as God's servant only, have no doubt whatever about this".

Again explaining the equality of mankind he said :

"Recognize all mankind, whether Hindus or Muslims as one. The same Lord is the Creator and Nourisher of all. Recognize no distinction among them. The minaret and mosque are the same. So are the Hindu worship and the Muslim prayer. Men are all one."

This shows that in the eyes of the Guru all human beings were equal and he had equal respect for all religions. He saw the same light manifest in all.

Because of ignorance some people carry misconceptions that the teachings of Gurbani and



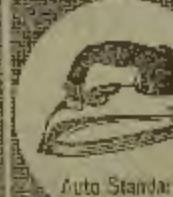
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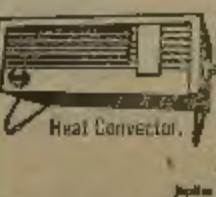
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Guru Gobind Singh showed two different stages in the development of Sikhism. This is a mistaken view, in as much as, both the Gurus had brought from Almighty an identical mission of launching a crusade against injustice, tyranny and repression perpetrated by the Mughal rulers on Hindus.

Guru Gobind Singh was thus a staunch believer in democracy and secularism. He was a foremost political, social, and religious emancipator of India. He had endeavoured to create a new nation, which followed the candid principles of liberty, equality and fraternity. Bilia Shah, a contemporary of Guru said "I neither say of the past; nor do I speak of the future; but I talk of the time of Guru Gobind Singh and declare openly That but for him all the Hindus would have been converted to a foreign culture and religion".

The Guru had aroused a strong spirit of patriotism by raising strong protests against injustice, and cruelty and he had rejuvenated the social order ridding it of all kinds of inequalities. Whosoever, whether high or low took the 'Amrit' (nectar) was filled with courage and zeal for sacrifice and considered himself equal to an army.

This spirit of 'Amrit' enabled the Khalsa to be fearless who had determined to face bravely kind any of difficulties and render any kind of service for the protection of the down-trodden and glory of the Khalsa and freedom of the country men from the yoke of the foreign rulers. Those who possessed Jackalish tendencies were converted into brave spirited lions. The Guru had thus fulfilled his object of life, which he had disclosed in "Bachitar Natak" as under—

"For this purpose was I born,
Understand all ye pious people,

To uphold righteousness, to protect those, worthy and virtuous,

To overcome and destroy all the evil doers"

Was this not a unique achievement which has no parallel in the world history?

Another most admirable feature of his noble principles was that even during the battles there was no enemy and all wounded or victims, irrespective of caste or creed, were to quirted equally. Bhai Kanhiya's example had proved this noble ideology. Bhai Kanhiya, the chief organizer of the Red-Cross organization of that time

All these virtues were imbibed by the Khalsa due to the spirit of pure sacrifice infused by the

'Amrit' (Nectar of the Guru, who had enjoined upon all his disciples (Amritdhari) to follow such noble and high-spirited principles. It is an irony of fate that the hill chiefs for whom the Guru had sacrificed everything, felt jealous and stood against him and joined the enemy's forces to fight against the Khalsa army of the Guru.

It is really most unfortunate that instead of understanding the meaning of 'Amrit' and its uses in its right perspective the present ruler had started a repressive policy, against the Amritdhari Khalsa, probably on the advice of politically motivated and biased-minded advisers. This was not at all a just and correct approach and as such it proved to be counter-productive.

THE AIM OF THE KHALSA

By : Headmaster Susha Singh, General Secretary, DSGMC
The creation of the Khalsa in the seventeenth century was a revolutionary step in the history of mankind. It turned a new leave in the history. Those very people who had been suffering the subjugation of tyrant rulers, were made bold enough to challenge the authorities after getting baptised by Guru Gobind Singh.

They opposed the oppression. Guru Nanak was born in 1469 and he raised a voice against tyranny. Thus the movement started by Guru Nanak was made successful by Guru Gobind Singh after a period of two hundred thirty years in 1699 with the creation of the Khalsa Panth. The Khalsa Panth made supreme

sacrifices to uphold the human values and serve mankind.

After the Mughal rule, the British Government also resorted to harsh measures against the Sikhs. Gurdwara Reform Movement is witness to the fact that the Jatha which started peacefully after prayers at Sri Akal Takht was mercilessly beaten. As per prayer offered at Sri Akal Takht the Sikhs remained peaceful and sacrificed their lives for it. Their contribution in the freedom struggle of the mother-land is no less and this is due to the blessings of Guru Gobind Singh. Let the Khalsa continue to uphold the banner.

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During the last two decades there has been a growing academic interest in the study of Sikh religion and its institutions with the result that a large volume of literature has appeared at the university level as well as otherwise. This is indeed a healthy and welcome development. At the same time there is a visible trend which appears to put members quite disturbing in its import and implications. The Institute of Sikh Studies therefore got some of these tendentious writings examined by experts who have held that the following writings are a clear misrepresentation of the Sikh religion and its history.

The first in the series which set this unfortunate trend, was the statement that it was misleading to call Guru Nanak the founder of Sikh religion, as he did not originate a new school of thought or a set of teachings. (McLeod, H. : 'Evolution of the Sikh Community', p. 5 (1973). This observation has been the base of similar other views that Sikhism is a part of the Bhakti tradition, being an amalgam of the Vaishnava and Nath systems. (Ibid : p. 5-7) or that it is an offshoot of the Vedantic thought in the Upanishads. (Raman, N.S.S. : 'The Effects of Sikh Diaspora on the Indian Religious Situation', p. 3; paper read in the seminar at Sri Nagar on 17-21 July 1988—Council for World's Religions). Another scholar has even concluded that it would be unpatriotic and unpatriotic for the Sikhs to try to maintain a separate identity from that of the Hindus. (Ravi Ravinder : 'Theological and Social Issues in Hindu and Sikh Traditions', Council of World's Religions; Seminar held at Sri Nagar, July 1988, p. 7) In short, the independent ideological base and identity of Guru Nanak's religion have been questioned.

In the same strain it has been asserted that the Gurus did not speak with one voice, and that the ideology of Guru Nanak was quite different from that of Guru Gobind Singh. A thesis has appeared that Guru Gobind Singh resorted to the mythology of the Goddess because of the needs of militancy, which could not be supported by the ideologies of the Guru Granth Sahib or the earlier Gurus. (Jain, Surjit : Conclusion, Ph.D. Thesis, Guru Nanak Dev University Amritsar).

In line with the above point it has been argued that Sikh militancy was the result of large scale influx of Jats in the Sikh fold during the time of the later Gurus, and that many of the features of Sikhism like egalitarianism and symbols like 'Yekhas' and 'Kirpan' were adopted by the Sikhs, because these were features of the Jat cultural pattern. (McLeod, H. : 'Evolution of the Sikh Community',

Misrepresentations in Sikh Studies

By : Kartar Singh Mann, Secretary, Institute of Sikh Studies, Chandigarh

p.16 (1975). A virtual endorsement of this view was made in a paper which says that Sikhism may be spoken of as a rural religion, and that when dealing with beliefs, rituals and practices of the Sikhs—he they religious or political—it is always worthwhile constantly to remind ourselves that we are fundamentally dealing with peasantry, and the world-view of this social class has historically always been very different from other social classes. (Oberoi, H.S. : 'Popular Satras, Goddesses, Village Sacred Sites : Re-reading Sikh Experience in the Nineteenth Century', p.28, Paper read at Conference at Berkeley, February 1987). It has also been recorded that Jats bewail the fact that the Gurus did not confer Guruship on any Jat. (McLeod, H. : 'Evolution of the Sikh Community', Chapter on Caste), p.88 (1975).

Apparently ignoring the separate ideological identity of the religion of Guru Nanak, a scholar has made the assertion that it is the Singh Sabha Movement of the late nineteenth and the early twentieth century that has created the present day situation, and that earlier Sikhs and Hindus were quintessentially the same, i.e., in the ideological purity the two religions were identical. It is alleged that it was the Singh Sabha that created the gap between them. The author calls the pre-Singh Sabha Sikhism as Sanskritised Sikhism which allegedly accepted the worship of gods, goddesses, graves, Sakhis, Sarver, Sita Devi, Pir, etc. Singh Sabha elite is blamed to have objected to such beliefs and practices for the first time. (Oberoi, H.S. : Paper referred above, p.3, and his paper read at Toronto in February 1987 as reviewed at page 244 in the Studies in Sikhism and Comparative Religion April-October 1988, Guru Nanak Foundation, New Delhi.)

Another scholar has pleaded that the main thrust of the Sikh Gurus was to preach against such social evils as existed in their times. This argument is based on the assumption that the Sikh Gurus had propounded no new ideological thesis except their preachings against unjust practices. The argument is carried further by saying that in the present times the responsibility for mitigating socio-economic inequalities and injustice has shifted from the field of religion to the field of politics, and that the state is already seized of this problem. (Lal, B.R. : 'Theological and Social Issues in Hindu and Sikh Traditions', Council of World's Religions—Seminar held at Sri

Nagar in July 1987, p.5)—The argument suggests that religion as an independent institution and force had become irrelevant today.

Statements have been made to the effect that there is no clear definition as to who is a Sikh. Accordingly Radha Swami, Nirankaris (Debt group) and 'Sahjdhari' are as much Sikhs as others, and that the SGPC or any other authority of the present times has no right to define Sikhism, and thereby to exclude any section of the community. It has also been suggested that 'Sahjdhari' constitute about 50% of the present day Sikhs.

Apart from the ideological attacks on the Sikh thesis mentioned above, certain fundamental institutions of the Sikh faith have also been questioned. Doubts have been cast on the very fact of Guru Gobind Singh having created the Khalsa as a separate community on the Baisakhi day of 1699 A.D. Similar doubts have been expressed in respect of the Tenth Master having vested the Guruship in the Guru Granth Sahib. (McLeod, H. : 'Evolution of the Sikh Community', p.17 (1987). Besides, objections have been made that the Kartarpur Bir is not the original Bir compiled by Guru Arjan Dev, and that some inconvenient hymns have been deleted from the original version. (Ibid, p.76-78)

We are fully aware that in academic matters scholars have a right to express their views freely, as far as they are based on facts and their rational interpretation. Considering the background of these scholars and their known links and leanings, it appears that misrepresentations mentioned above are hardly the result of any high level academic understanding or research.

Students of Sikhism are aware that it was Guru Nanak who basically changed the entire trend and direction of Indian religions. Prior to Guru Nanak the world was considered 'mithya', so that the way to salvation was through asceticism, monasticism, Sanyas and Tapas. The Guru, however, asserted that the world was real as God's creation. He recommended a worldly life accepting full social responsibility. In stead of accepting the hierarchy of Varanashram Dharm, he rejected the caste ideology and preached equality of mankind. Earlier religions denounced women and prescribed celibacy. Guru Nanak demolished this prejudice. "How could one who gave birth to kings, be considered inferior?" he asked. Ahimsa had been an integral part of the religious path.

He rejected it saying that its advocates did not understand what was flesh or non-flesh, and what was sin or non-sin. This being the reality, to say that Guru Nanak made no new contribution to religious thought, or that Sikhism has no independent and distinct ideology of its own, indicates either a gross ignorance of the very base of Sikhism, or an attempt at distorting the Sikh religion.

It has been claimed by some of these authors that their suggestions follow the application of modern methodology to the study of religion and its institutions. We are not aware of any modern methodology that would sanction the making of incorrect and misleading statements or of an insinuation regarding the nature of the Sikhs that a few portions of it "were rather incompletely obliterated in order to bring the two versions in line", or "because they could not be reconciled with beliefs subsequently held by the Panth". No serious scholar would make such observations without an examination of the Bir. Nor is it a piece of research to assert that Jats bewail the fact that the Gurus made no Jat as a Guru, especially when there is no record, old or new, to warrant such an observation. Such observations would serve no academic interests, but could be aimed at creating a wedge between Jats and non-Jats.

Considering the organization and other links of some of the scholars, the somewhat low level of most of these observations, and the unified direction of the statements that are sensitive of the Sikh ideology and its institutions, we have a feeling that these writings may have a concerted objective in propagating destructive views. In this background, it is felt that we shall be failing in our duty, if we did not bring it to the notice of the academic and literate world the clearly unfortunate character and consequences of such writings.



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33 Punjab political prisoners detained at historical Hazaribagh jail

Sarjit Singh Mishas writes to Bihar government official

Recently Punjab Sikhs' Speaker Sardar Sarjit Singh Mishas visited Hazaribagh Central Jail (Bihar). After going through the list provided by superintendent of the jail, Sardar Mishas found omission of names of Punjab political prisoners including ex-Sgt. Sahib Bhai Randhir Singh Bhai Sahib along with 32 political prisoners was transferred from Multan Jail to Hazaribagh Jail in July 1917. He pointed out this lapse to the superintendent who requested Sardar Mishas to provide him with the list of Punjab political prisoners.

On his return to Chandigarh, Sardar Mishas sent the superintendent the following letter and a list of 32 Punjab political prisoners.

I have come back home after seeing developmental works being done in Bihar state and visiting some of the places of interest there viz. Patna Sahib, Vaishali, Rajgir, Pawapuri, Nafanda, Gaya, Bodh Gaya, Sasaram, Hazaribagh and Ranchi.

I am extremely thankful to you for taking me round the Central Jail Hazaribagh on the 27th March, 1969 and providing me an opportunity to have a glimpse of a few cells where freedom fighters like Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad, Shri Jai Parkash Nerali, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Shri Krishan Singh and Sh. Aengriha Naik Singh, father of the present Bihar Chief Minister, Shri S.N. Singh, had been detained.

You showed me a list of freedom fighters who had been detained in the aforementioned jail. I pointed out that Bhai Sahib Bhai Randhir Singh alongwith many other Punjab political prisoners had been kept in the Hazaribagh Jail during the British Rule but their names were missing from the list.

You asked me the exact period of their detention so that you might be able to trace out record relevant to that period. I have consulted the book titled *Jail Chittran* written in Punjabi language by Bhai Sahib Bhai Randhir Singh and have come to know that Bhai Sahib was transferred from Central Jail Multan alongwith other 32 political prisoners to Hazaribagh Jail in July 1917 and remained there till October, 1921. The list of 32 other political prisoners is enclosed for your perusal. I hope you would be able to trace out the relevant record and include the names of these Punjab political prisoners in the list maintained in your office.

The following is the list of Punjabi political prisoners who were detained in Hazaribagh Jail alongwith Bhai Sahib Bhai Randhir Singh for the period from July, 1917 to October 1921:-

1. Bhai Udhans Singh, Village Ladonpur, Distt. Gurdaspur.
2. Bhai Atar Singh, Village Dheekampur, P.S. Chakwal, Distt. Jhelum.
3. Bhai Arjan Singh, Jagran, Distt. Ludhiana.
4. Bhai Inder Singh, Village Davali, Teh. Jagran, Distt.

5. Bhai Sucha Singh, Chohla, Distt. Amritsar.
6. Bhai Sajjan Singh, Village Narangwal, Distt. Ludhiana.
7. Bhai Soje Singh, Village Valtoba, Distt. Lahore.
8. Bhai Sunder Singh, Village Davul, Nangal, Distt. Amritsar.
9. Bhai Harman Singh, Village Rasooipur, Distt. Amritsar.
10. Bhai Haroram Singh, Village Kala Singh, Kapurthala State,
11. Bhai Hari Singh Kakkar, Distt. Amritsar.
12. Bhai Hira Singh, Village Charan Mutsil, Lahore Cantt.
13. Bhai Kesar Singh, Village Sur Singh, Distt. Lahore.
14. Bhai Kirpa Singh, Village Lang Majri, Distt. Hoshiarpur.
15. Bhai Karam Singh, Tatkhalia, Village Kotla Ajmer, Distt. Ludhiana.
16. Bhai Gujjar Singh, Village Bhakna, Distt. Amritsar.
17. Bhai Ganda Singh, Wadu Nihang, Village Sur Singh, Distt. Lahore.
18. Bhai Ganda Singh, Chotta Nihang, Village Khapar Kheri, Distt. Amritsar.
19. Bhai Jinder Singh alias Rajinder Singh, Doodadhar, Village Chaudhriwala, Distt. Amritsar.
20. Bhai Teja Singh, Bhikkhwied, Distt. Lahore.
21. Bhai Dal Singh alias Pala, Singh, Dhudike, Distt. Ferozepur.
22. Bhai Natha Singh, Village Dhun, Distt. Lahore.
23. Bhai Pakhar Singh, Dhudike, Distt. Ferozepur.
24. Bhai Bogh Singh Mahant, Gurdwara Juss Sahib, Distt. Amritsar.
25. Bhai Budda Singh, Village Sur Singh, Distt. Lahore.
26. Bhai Mangal Singh, Village Valtoba, Distt. Lahore.
27. Bhai Mastan Singh, Village Negangwal, Distt. Ludhiana.
28. Bhai Mahan Singh, Village Kassel, Distt. Amritsar.
29. Bhai Labi Singh, Village Chak Wallia Dakhli Kasur (Lahore).
30. Bhai Lal Singh, Village Narangwal, Distt. Ludhiana.
31. Bhai Wasakha Singh, Village Dadehat, Distt. Amritsar.
32. Bhai Natain Singh alias Bhai Kartar Singh, Patiala

Spirit of the people of Gujarat sustained the march of progress despite three consecutive years of severe drought



LEGEND OF GOLDEN TEMPLE

THE GOLDEN TEMPLE (History, Art and Architecture) By P. S. Arshi, published by Harwan Publishing House, New Delhi, price Rs. 500/-

This book deals with history of Golden Temple, Amritsar, its art and architecture. It consists of 142 pages in addition to 42 photos in the end. The main book has 4 chapters than architectural drawings from page 97 to page 119. In the end, the author has reproduced observations of various European scholars and English translation of Shabads from Sri Guru Granth Sahib with reference to Harmandir Sahib. Bibliography and glossary of important words is also included.

The book is quite exhaustive regarding designs, architectural details, beautification, embellishment and architectural analysis. This may be the first book dealing with the subject so elaborately. Vivid account of the architectural details, embellishments, frescoes, mural paintings, floral and zoological design are described in the book. The author has used very specific words for each and every architectural design and construction. It was thus necessary to add the glossary of these words to the book which is very helpful in understanding the designs.

The various legends in respect of Golden Temple have been mentioned in the book but wisely in respect of some of them he has not given his own observations. The history of Darbar Sahib, its foundation, construction and persons connected with it have been dealt with reference to historical writings and the author has also given his own version of some places after considering the

various available material. Very aptly the legend regarding the doors of Darbar Deodi have been dealt with and it is apparent that these doors are not the same as that of Som Nath Temple. The present location of these doors or Som Nath Temple is traced as lying at Agra Fort or in the British Museum, London.

Some of the plates are in colour whereas rest are in black and white. The get up of the coloured photos is very good and colours are also very bright. Those plates in colour are 16 in number out of 42. It would have been much better if all the plates were in colour. The plates which are in black and white do not serve the purpose for which the same are included in the book especially plate Numbers 4,5,8,10, 13 to 15,25, 28 to 31, 35, 28, 39 and 40. The various plates and drawings given in the end should have been placed along with the text instead of putting them together in the end.

The observations of European authors i.e. Hugel, Baron Charles, French C.J., Wakefield W., David Ross, Major H.H. Cole, W.W. Hunter, J.C. Oman, J. Ferguson, Percy Brown and Michael Edwards reproduced in the book are very useful and thought provoking. Though some of the observations of these authors may not be correct but still they do deserve consideration while forming any view on the history of Golden Temple, Amritsar.

Sri P.S. Arshi deserves all congratulations for writing this book and the publisher for the get up.

—Rajdev Singh, Advocate Patiala.

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BIRTH OF KHALSA

By : Jaswant Singh Kalkaji,
Acting President, DSGMC

To champion the cause of the down-trodden people and cause them into a Saint-Soldier image, it was necessary to equip them with rosary in one hand and a sword in the other. Rosary meant to remind them of the Almighty and life of righteousness; the sword was to defend the innocent against tyranny.

The mission of Guru Nanak was to provide support to the depressed people and his successors also continued the same task. Within a span of two hundred years man was educated to support himself. The test of such a man for his self-reliance was conducted by Guru Gobind Singh and he provided him the baptism of Khanda to oppose the tyrants. He was also charged with the responsibility of defending the helpless and the poor.

The two hundred and ninety year old history of the Sikhs is witness to the fact that the Sikhs have faithfully discharged the responsibility entrusted to them by Guru Gobind Singh. It can also be said with confidence that every truthful Sikh will continue to adhere to this noble task.

Amarjit Singh

New Member of Punjab Public Service Commission



The Punjab Governor, Mr. S.S. Ray, last week administered the oath of office, allegiance and secrecy to Sardar Amarjit Singh as a member of the Punjab Public Service Commission at Raj Bhawan Chandigarh.

Before his appointment as member of the PPSC, Sardar Amarjit Singh served the State Cooperative Department on different other assignments including Managing Director of the Punjab State Cooperative Bank for nearly six years.

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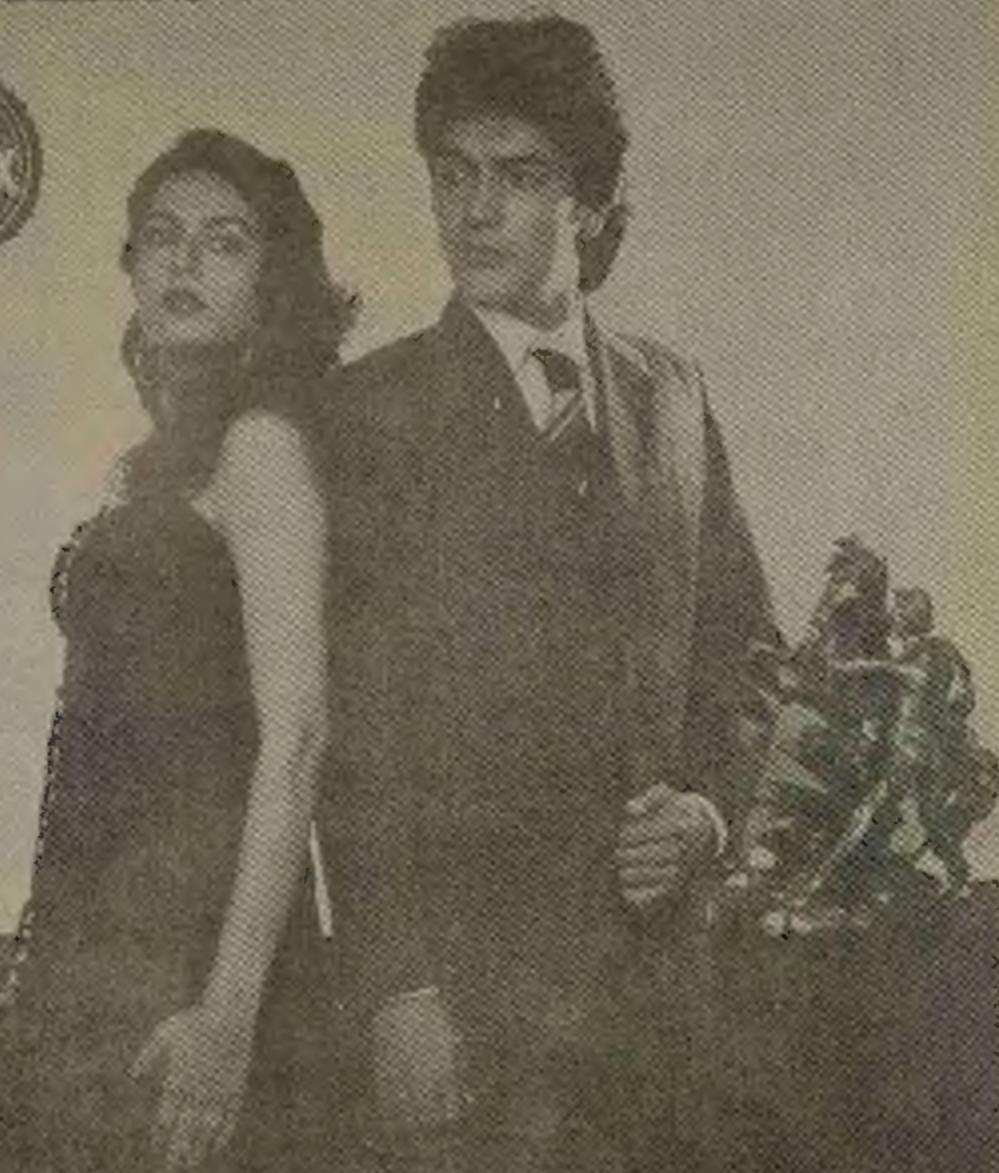
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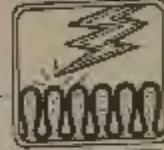
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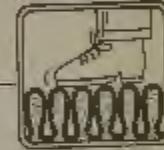
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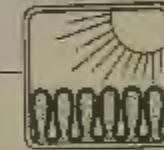
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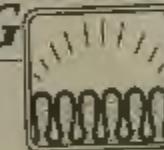
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